

PARSONS'S MINOR THEATRE.



Engraved by W. Riddg. from an Original by Colen.

SAM^L FOOTE, Esq^r.

Printed for J. Baskins, at, Rottenrow Row 1764.

THE
DRAMATIC WORKS
OF
SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.
VOL. I.

CONTAINING

THE MINOR.

THE KNIGHTS.

THE LANE LOVER.

THE LYAR.

AND,

THE COMMISSARY.



London :

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,
FOR J. PARSONS, N^o 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1795



WR

THEAT

The Line

FOR

THE MINOR.

A COMEDY

IN THREE ACTS.

WRITTEN BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

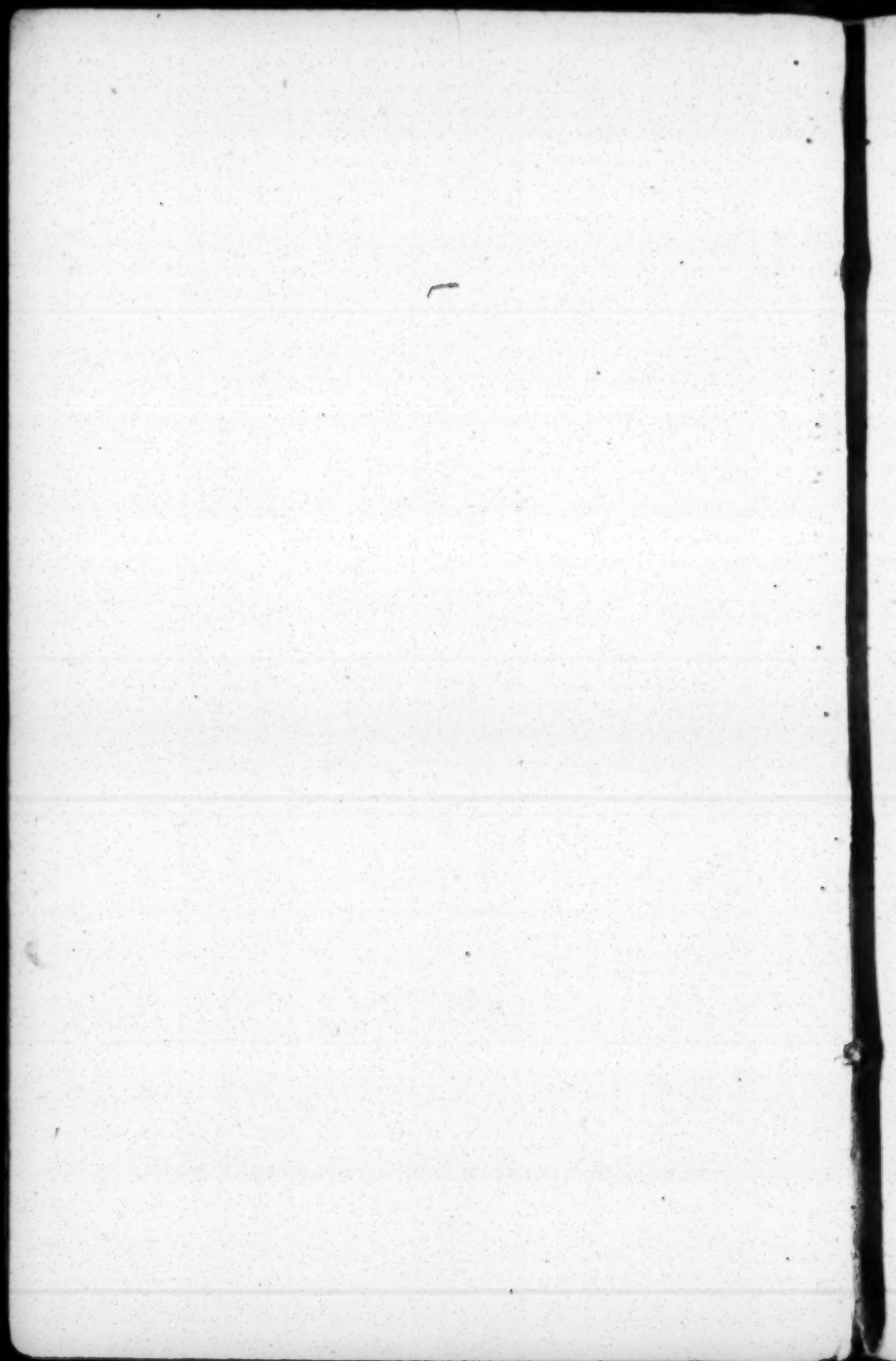
*THEATRES ROYAL, DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-
GARDEN.*

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,
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1793.



The Minor.

THIS inimitable satire was written by the late Samuel Foote and, for the first time, represented at the Haymarket Little Theatre in the Summer of 1760.

It was welcomed with that applause, which could only be produced by its intrinsic merit; for the characters were very indifferently sustained.

Nothing, however, acts more powerfully than the grateful sunshine of public favour; for thirty-eight nights the Minor drew full benches; while the performers mellowed into their business by repetition and encouragement.

A woman of infamous memory, known, at the time the piece was written, by the appellation of MOTHER DOUGLASS, was held up to general odium, in the character of MRS. COLE; while that of SMIRKE produced a laugh at the expence of Langford the auctioneer, whose peculiarities in his calling attracted the wit's observation, and provoked his ridicule.

In the conclusion, FOOTE, in the part of Shift, gave an exact imitation of the voice and manner of the late Reverend George Whitfield. In this hazardous attempt, the disapprobation expressed by the few, was over-ruled by the many.

As the Writer, and his Object, are removed from the GRAND STAGE, upon which they both sustained their respective parts; their interest, in human decision, has long ceased: therefore, as its blame, or its praise, affects them no more, we drop the pen; in the flattering hope, that candour will pardon where it can't approve, and that in the company of the Minor our readers will find amusement.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

Sir William Wealthy,	MR. BADDELEY
Shift, Smirk, and Mrs. Cole,	MR. JOHN BANNISTER
Sir George Wealthy,	MR. WHITFIELD
Loader,	MR. R. PALMER
Mr. Richard Wealthy,	MR. PACKER
Dick,	MR. BURTON
Transfer,	MR. HOLLINGSWORTH
Lucy	MISS COLLINS.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Sir William Wealthy,	MR. CHAS. BANNISTER
Shift, Smirk, and Mrs. Cole,	MR. WEWITZER
Sir George Wealthy,	MR. M'CREADY
Loader,	MR. CUBITT
Mr. Richard Wealthy,	MR. THOMPSON
Dick,	MR. STEVENS
Transfer,	MR. ROCK
Lucy,	MRS. LEWIS.



THE MINOR.

INTRODUCTION.

‘ Enter CANKER and SMART.

‘ *Smart.*

‘ BUT are you sure he has leave?

‘ *Cank.* Certain.

‘ *Smart.* I’m damn’d glad on’t. For now we
‘ shall have a laugh, either with him or at him; it
‘ does not signify which.

‘ *Cank.* Not a farthing.

‘ *Smart.* D’you know his scheme?

‘ *Cank.* Not I. But is not the door of the Little
‘ Theatre open?

‘ *Smart.* Yes. Who is that fellow that seems to
‘ stand centry there?

‘ *Cank.* By his tatter’d garb and meagre visage, he
‘ must be one of the troop.

‘ *Smart.* I’ll call him. Halloo, Mr. ———

‘ Enter PEARSE.

‘ What, is there any thing going on over the way?

‘ *Pear.* A rehearsal.

‘ *Smart.* Of what?

‘ *Pear.* A new piece.

‘ *Smart.* Foote’s?

‘ *Pear.* Yes.

‘ *Cank.* Is he there?

‘ *Pear.* He is.

‘ *Smart.* Zounds, let’s go and see what he is about.

‘ *Cank.* With all my heart.

‘ *Smart.* Come along then. [*Exeant.*

‘ *Enter* FOOTE *and an* ACTOR.

‘ *Foote.* Sir, this will never do; you must get rid
‘ of your high notes, and country cant. Oh, ’tis the
‘ true strolling—

‘ *Enter* SMART *and* CANKER.

‘ *Smart.* Ha! ha! ha! what, hard at it, my boy?
‘ Here’s your old friend Canker and I come for a
‘ peep. Well, and hey, what is your plan?

‘ *Foote.* Plan!

‘ *Smart.* Ay, what are your characters? Give us
‘ your group; how is your cloth fill’d?

‘ *Foote.* Characters!

‘ *Smart.* Ay.—Come, come, communicate. What,
‘ man, we will lend thee a lift. I have a damn’d
‘ fine original for thee, an aunt of my own, just
‘ come from the north, with the true Newcastle burr
‘ in her throat; and a nose and a chin—I am afraid
‘ she is not well enough known: but I have a re-
‘ medy for that. I’ll bring her the first night of your
‘ piece, place her in a conspicuous station, and

' whisper the secret to the whole house. That will
' be damn'd fine, won't it?

' *Foote.* Oh, delicious!

' *Smart.* But don't name me: for if she smokes
' me for the author, I shall be dash'd out of her co-
' dicil in a hurry.

' *Foote.* Oh, never fear me. But I should think
' your uncle 'Tom a better character.

' *Smart.* What, the politician?

' *Foote.* Ay; that every day, after dinner, as soon
' as the cloth is remov'd, fights the battle of Minden,
' batters the French with cherry-stones, and pursues,
' 'em to the banks of the Rhine in a stream of spilt
' Port.

' *Smart.* Oh, damn it, he'll do.

' *Foote.* Or what say you to your father-in law,

' Sir Timothy? who, though as broken-winded
' as a Hounslow post-horse, is eternally chaunting
' Vehetian ballads. *Kata tore cara higlia.*

' *Smart.* Admirable! by heavens!—Have you got
' 'em?

Foote. No.

' *Smart.* Then in with 'em, my boy.

' *Foote.* Not one.

' *Smart.* Prithee why not?

' *Foote.* Why, -look'e, *Smart*, though you are in
' the language of the world, my friend, yet there is
' one thing you, I'm sure, love better than any
' body.

' *Smart.* What's that?

' *Foote.* Mischief.

‘ *Smart.* No prithe—

‘ *Foot.* How, now, am I sure that you, who st
‘ ready give up your relations, may not have some
‘ design upon me?

‘ *Smart.* I don’t understand you.

‘ *Foot.* Why, as soon as my characters begin to
‘ circulate a little successfully, my mouth is stopp’d
‘ in a minute by the clamour of your relations.—
‘ Oh, damn’d, ’tis a shame,—it should not be,—peo-
‘ ple of distinction brought upon the stage,—And
‘ so, out of compliment to your cousins, I am to be
‘ beggar’d for treating the public with the follies of
‘ your family, at your own request.

‘ *Smart.* How can you think I wou’d be such a
‘ dog? What the devil, then, are we to have nothing
‘ personal? Give us the actors, however.

‘ *Foot.* Oh, that’s stale. Besides, I think they
‘ have, of all men, the best right to complain.

‘ *Smart.* How so?

‘ *Foot.* Because; by rendering them ridiculous
‘ in their profession, you at the same time injure
‘ their pockets. Now, as to the other gentry, they
‘ have providentially something besides their under-
‘ standing to rely on; and the only injury they can
‘ receive is, that the whole town is then diverted
‘ with what before was only the amusement of pri-
‘ vate parties.

‘ *Cank.* Give us then a national portrait: a Scotch-
‘ man or an Irishman.

‘ *Foot.* If you mean merely the dialect of the two
‘ countries, I can’t think it either a subject of satire

' or humour; it is an accidental unhappiness, for
 ' which a man is no more accountable than the
 ' colour of his hair. Now, affectation I take to be
 ' the true comic object. If, indeed, a North Briton,
 ' struck with a scheme of reformation, should ad-
 ' vance from the banks of the Tweed, to teach the
 ' English the true pronunciation of their own lan-
 ' guage, he would, I think, merit your laughter:
 ' nor would a Dublin mechanic, who, from heading
 ' the Liberty Boys in a skirmish on Ormond Quay,
 ' should think he had a right to prescribe military
 ' laws to the first commander in Europe, be a less
 ' ridiculous object.

' *Smart.* Are there such?

' *Foot.* If you mean that the blunders of a few
 ' peasants, or the partial principles of a single scound-
 ' rel, are to stand as characteristic marks of a whole
 ' country; your pride may produce a laugh; but,
 ' believe me, it is at the expence of your understand-
 ' ing.

' *Cank.* Heyday, what a system is here! Laws for
 ' laughing! And pray, sage Sir, instruct us when we
 ' may laugh with propriety?

' *Foot.* At an old beag, a supernannuated beauty, a
 ' military coward, a stuttering orator, or a gouty dan-
 ' cer. In short, whoever affects to be what he is
 ' not, or strives to be what he cannot, is an object
 ' worthy the poet's pen and your mirth.

' *Smart.* Psha, I don't know what you mean by
 ' your, is nots, and, cannots,—damn'd abstruse jar-
 ' gon. Ha, Canker.

‘ *Cank.* Well, but if you will not give us persons,
‘ let us have things. Treat us with a modern
‘ amour, and a state intrigue, or a—

‘ *Foot.* And so amuse the public ear at the expence
‘ of private peace. You must excuse me.

‘ *Cank.* And with these principles you expect to
‘ thrive on this spot?

‘ *Smart.* No, no, it won’t do. I tell thee, the
‘ plain roast and boil’d of the theatres will never do
‘ at this table. We must have high-season’d ragouts
‘ and rich sauces.

‘ *Foot.* Why, perhaps, by way of desert, I may
‘ produce something that may hit your palate.

‘ *Smart.* Your bill of fare?

‘ *Foot.* What think you of one of those itinerant
‘ field orators, who, though at declared enmity with
‘ common sense, have the address to poison the prin-
‘ ciples, and at the same time pick the pockets, of
‘ half our industrious fellow-subjects?

‘ *Cank.* Have a care. Dangerous ground. *Ludere
‘ cum sacris*, you know.

‘ *Foot.* Now I look upon it in a different manner.
‘ I consider these gentlemen in the light of public
‘ performers like myself; and whether we exhibit
‘ at Tottenham-court or the Hay-market, our pur-
‘ pose is the same, and the place is immaterial.

‘ *Cank.* Why, indeed, if it be considered—

‘ *Foot.* Nay, more, I must beg leave to assert,
‘ that ridicule is the only antidote against this per-
‘ nicious poison. This is a madness that argument
‘ cannot cure: and should a little wholesome seve-

‘ rity be applied, persecution would be the immediate
‘ cry : where then can we have recourse but to the
‘ Comic Muse ? Perhaps the archness and severity
‘ of her smile may redress an evil that the laws can-
‘ not reach, or reason reclaim.

‘ *Cank.* Why, if it does not cure those already dis-
‘ temper’d, it may be a means to stop the infection.

‘ *Smart.* But how is your scheme conducted ?

‘ *Foote.* Of that you may judge. We are just
‘ going upon a repetition of the piece. I should be
‘ glad to have your opinion.

‘ *Smart.* We will give it you.

‘ *Foote.* One indulgence : As you are Englishmen,
‘ I think I need not beg, that as, from necessity, most
‘ of my performers are new, you will allow for their
‘ inexperience, and encourage their timidity.

‘ *Smart.* But reasonable.

• *Foote.* Come then, Prompter, begin.

‘ *Pear.* Lord, Sir, we are all at a stand.

‘ *Foote.* What’s the matter ?

‘ *Pear.* Mrs. O-Schohnesy has return’d the part
‘ of the bawd ; she says she is a gentlewoman, and
‘ it would be a reflection on her family to do any
‘ such thing.

‘ *Foote.* Indeed !

‘ *Pear.* If it had been only a whore, says she, I
‘ should not have minded it ; because no lady need
‘ be ashamed of doing that.

‘ *Foote.* Well, there is no help for it ; but these
‘ gentlemen must not be disappointed. Well, I will
‘ do the character myself.’ [Exeunt.]

ACT I.

Sir WILLIAM WEALTHY and Mr. RICHARD WEALTHY.

Sir William.

COME, come, brother, I know the world. People who have their attention eternally fixed upon one object, can't help being a little narrow in their notions.

R. Weal. A sagacious remark that; and highly probable that we merchants, who maintain a constant correspondence with the four quarters of the world, should know less of it than your fashionable fellows, whose whole experience is bounded by Westminster-bridge.

Sir Wil. Nay, brother, as a proof that I am not blind to the benefit of travelling, George, you know, has been in Germany these four years.

R. Weal. Where he is well grounded in gaming and gluttony: France has furnished him with fawning and flattery; Italy equipped him with capriols and cantatas; and, thus accomplished, my young gentleman is returned with a cargo of whores, cooks, valets de chambre, and fiddle-sticks, a most valuable member of the British commonwealth.

Sir Wil. You dislike, then, my system of education.

R. Weal. Most sincerely.

Sir Wil. The whole?

R. Weal. Every particular.

Sir Wil. The early part, I should imagine, might merit your approbation.

R. Weal. Least of all. What, I suppose, because he has run the gauntlet through a public school, where, at sixteen, he had practised more vices than he would otherwise have heard of at sixty.

Sir Wil. Ha, ha, prejudice!

R. Weal. Then, indeed, you removed him to the university; where, lest his morals should be mended, and his understanding improved, you fairly set him free from the restraint of the one and the drudgery of the other, by the privileged distinction of a silk gown and a velvet cap.

Sir Wil. And all these evils, you think, a city education would have prevented.

R. Weal. Doubtless.—Proverbs, proverbs, brother William, convey wholesome instruction. Idleness is the root of all evil. Regular hours, constant employment, and good example, can't fail to form the mind.

Sir Wil. Why, truly brother, had you stuck to your old civic vices, hypocrisy, cozenage, and avarice, I don't know whether I might not have committed George to your care; but you cockneys now beat us suburbanians at our own weapons. What, old boy, times are changed since the date of thy indentures; when the sleek crop-ear'd prentice us'd to dangle after his mistress, with the great bible under

his arm, to St Bride's on a Sunday ; bring home the text, repeat the divisions of the discourse, dine at twelve, and regale, upon a gaudy day, with buns and beer at Islington or Mile-end.

R. Weal. Wonderfully facetious !

Sir Wil. Our modern lads are of a different metal. They have their gaming clubs in the garden, their little lodgings, the snug depositories of their rusty swords and occasional bag-wigs ; their horses for the turf ; aye, and their commissions of bankruptcy too, before they are well out of their time.

R. Weal. Infamous aspersion !

Sir Wil. But the last meeting at Newmarket, Lord Lofty received, at the hazard-table, the identical note from the individual tailor to whom he had paid it but the day before for a new set of liveries.

R. Weal. Invention !

Sir Wil. These are anecdotes you will never meet with in your weekly travels from Cateaton-street to your boarded box in Clapham, brother.

R. Weal. And yet that boarded box, as your prodigal spendthrift proceeds will soon be the only seat of the family.

Sir Wil. May be not. Who knows what a reformation our project may produce.

R. Weal. I do. None at all.

Sir Wil. Why so ?

R. Weal. Because your means are ill-proportioned to their end. Were he my son, I would serve him.

Sir Wil. As you have done your daughter. Discard him. But consider, I have but one.

R. Weal. That would weigh nothing with me: for, was Charlotte to set up a will of her own, and reject the man of my choice, she must expect to share the fate of her sister. I consider families as a smaller kind of kingdoms, and would have disobedience in the one as severely punished as rebellion in the other. Both cut off from their respective societies.

Sir Wil. Poor Lucy! But surely you begin to relent. May not I intercede?

R. Weal. Look ye, brother, you know my mind. I will be absolute. If I meddle with the management of your son, it is at your own request; but if, directly or indirectly, you interfere with my banishment of that wilful, headstrong, disobedient hussy, all ties between us are broke; and I shall no more remember you as a brother than I do her as a child.

Sir Wil. I have done. But to return. You think there is a probability in my plan?

R. Weal. I shall attend the issue.

Sir Wil. You will lend your aid, however?

R. Weal. We shall see how you go on.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. A letter, Sir.

Sir Wil. Oh, from Capias, my attorney. Who brought it?

Serv. The person is without, Sir.

Sir Wil. Bid him wait. [*Reads.*] [*Exit servant.*]

Worthy Sir,

The bearer is the person I promised to procure. I thought it was proper for you to examine him viva voce.

B 2

So if you administer a few interrogatories, you will find, by cross-questioning him, whether he is a competent person to prosecute the cause you wot of. I wish you a speedy issue; and as there can be no default in your judgment, am of opinion it should be carried into immediate execution. I am,

Worthy Sir, &c.

TIMOTHY CAPIAS.

P. S. The party's name is Samuel Shift. He is an admirable mime, or mimic, and most delectable company; as we experience every Tuesday night at our club, the Magpye and Horse-shoe, Fetter-lane.

Very methodical indeed, Mr. Capias!—John.

Enter SERVANT.

Bid the person who brought this letter walk in. [Exit servant.] Have you any curiosity, brother?

R. Weal. Not a jot. I must to the 'Change. In the evening you may find me in the counting-house, or at Jonathan's. [Exit R. Wealthy.]

Sir Wil. You shall hear from me.

Enter SHIFT and SERVANT.

Shut the door, John, and remember, I am not at home. [Exit servant.] You came from Mr. Capias?

Shift. I did, Sir.

Sir Wil. Your name, I think, is Shift?

Shift. It is, Sir.

Sir Wil. Did Mr. Capias drop any hint of my business with you?

Shift. None. He only said, with his spectacles on his nose, and his hand upon his chin, Sir William

Wealthy is a respectable personage, and my client : he wants to retain you in a certain affair, and will open the case, and give you your brief himself : if you adhere to his instructions, and carry your cause, he is generous, and will discharge your bill without taxation.

Sir Wil. Ha, ha ! my friend Capias to a hair !— Well, Sir, this is no bad specimen of your abilities. But see that the door is fast. Now, Sir, you are to—

Shift. A moment's pause, if you please. You must know, Sir William, I am a prodigious admirer of forms. Now, Mr. Capias tells me, that it is always the rule to administer a retaining fee before you enter upon the merits.

Sir Wil. Oh, Sir, I beg your pardon !

Shift. Not that I questioned your generosity ; but forms, you know—

Sir Wil. No apology, I beg. But as we are to have a closer connection, it may not be amiss, by way of introduction, to understand one another a little. Pray, Sir, where was you born ?

Shift. At my father's.

Sir Wil. Hum !—And what was he ?

Shift. A gentleman.

Sir Wil. What was you bred ?

Shift. A gentleman.

Sir Wil. How do you live ?

Shift. Like a gentleman.

Sir Wil. Could nothing induce you to unbesom yourself ?

Shift. Look'e, Sir William, there is a kind of something in your countenance, a certain openness and generosity, a *je ne sçai quoi* in your manner, that I will unlock :—you shall see me all.

Sir Wil. You will oblige me.

Shift. You must know, then, that fortune, which frequently delights to raise the noblest structures from the simplest foundations; who from a tailor made a pope, from a gin-shop an empress, and many a prime minister from nothing at all, has thought fit to raise me to my present height, from the humble employment of—Light your Honour—A link boy.

Sir Wil. A pleasant fellow. Who were your parents?

Shift. I was produced, Sir, by a left-handed marriage; in the language of the newspapers, between an illustrious lamp-lighter and an itinerant cat and dog butcher. Cat's meat and dog's meat. I dare say, you have heard my mother, Sir. But as to this happy pair I owe little besides my being, I shall drop them where they dropt me—in the street.

Sir Wil. Proceed?

Shift. My first knowledge of the world I owe to a school which has produced many a great man,—the avenues of the playhouse. There, Sir, leaning on my extinguished link, I learned dexterity from pick-pockets, connivance from constables, politics and fashions from footmen, and the art of making and breaking a promise from their masters. Here, sirrah, light me across the kennel. I hope your honour will remember poor Jack. You ragged ras-

cal, I have no halfpence—I'll pay you the next time I see you.—But, lack-a-day, Sir, that time I saw as seldom as his tradesmen.

Sir Wil. Very well.

Shift. To these accomplishments from without the theatre, I must add one that I obtained within.

Sir Wil. How did you gain admittance there?

Shift. My merit, Sir, that, like my link, threw a radiance round me. A detachment from the headquarters here took possession, in the summer, of a country corporation, where I did the honours of the barn, by sweeping the stage and clipping the candles. There my skill and address were so conspicuous, that it procured me the same office, the ensuing winter, at Drury-lane, where I acquired intrepidity, the crown of all my virtues.

Sir Wil. How did you obtain that?

Shift. By my post. For, I think, Sir, he that dares stand the shot of the gallery, in lighting, snuffing, and sweeping, the first night of a new play, may bid defiance to the pillory, with all its customary compliments.

Sir Wil. Some truth in that.

Shift. But an unlucky crab apple, applied to my right eye by a patriot gingerbread baker from the Borough, who would not suffer three dancers from Switzerland, because he hated the French, forced me to a precipitate retreat.

Sir Wil. Poor devil!

Shift. Broglio and Contades have done the same. But, as it happened, like a tennis-ball, I rose higher from the rebound.

Sir Wil. How so?

Shift. My misfortune, Sir, moved the compassion of one of our performers, a whimsical man; he took me into his service. To him I owe, what, I believe, will make me useful to you.

Sir Wil. Explain.

Shift. Why, Sir, my master was remarkable happy in an art, which, however, disesteemed at present, is, by Tully, reckoned amongst the perfections of an orator; mimickry.

Sir Wil. Why, you are deeply read, Mr. Shift!

Shift. A smattering—but as I was saying, Sir, nothing came amiss to my master: Bipedes or quadrupeds; rationals or animals; from the clamour of the bar to the cackle of the barn-door; from the soporific twang of the tabernacle of Tottenham-court to the melodious bray of their long-eared brethren in Bunhill-fields; all were objects of his imitation and my attention. In a word, Sir, for two whole years, under this professor, I studied and starved, impoverished my body and pampered my mind; till thinking myself pretty near equal to my master, I made him one of his own bows, and set up for myself.

Sir Wil. You have been successful, I hope.

Shift. Pretty well. I cannot complain. My art, Sir, is a *passé-par-tout*. I seldom want employment. Let's see how stand my engagements. [*Pulls out a pocket book.*] Hum—hum—Oh! Wednesday at Mrs. Gammui's, near Hanover-square. There, there, I shall make a meal upon the Mingotti; for her lady-

ship is in the opera interest ; but, however, I shall revenge her cause upon her rival Mattei. Sunday evening at Lady Sustituto's concert. Thursday I dine upon the actors, with ten Templars, at the Mitre, in Fleet-street. Friday I am to give the amorous parley of two intriguing cats in a gutter, with the disturbing of a hen-roost, at Mr. Deputy Sugarsop's, near the Monument. So, Sir, you see my hands are full. In short, Sir William, there is not a buck or a turtle devoured within the bills of mortality, but there I may, if I please, stick a napkin under my chin.

Sir Wil. I'm afraid, Mr. Shift, I must break in a little upon your engagements ; but you shall be no loser by the bargain.

Shift. Command me.

Sir Wil. You can be secret as well as serviceable !

Shift. Mute as a mackerel.

Sir Wil. Come hither then. If you betray me to my son——

Shift. Scalp me.

Sir Wil. Enough.—You must know then, the hopes of our family are, Mr. Shift, centered in one boy.

Shift. And I warrant he is a hopeful one.

Sir Wil. No interruption, I beg. George has been abroad these four years, and from his late behaviour, I have reason to believe, that had a certain event happened, which I'm afraid he wished,—my death——

Shift. Yes ; that's natural enough.

Sir Wil. Nay, pray,—there would soon be an end to an ancient and honourable family.

Shift. Very melancholy, indeed. But families, like besoms, will wear to the stumps, and finally fret out, as you say.

Sir Wil. Prithee peace for five minutes.

Shift. I am tongue-ty'd.

Sir Wil. Now I have projected a scheme to prevent this calamity.

Shift. Ay, I should be glad to hear that.

Sir Wil. I am going to tell it you.

Shift. Proceed.

Sir Wil. George, as I have contriv'd it, shall experience all the miseries of real ruin, without running the least risk.

Shift. Ay, that will be a *coup de maitre*.

Sir Wil. I have prevail'd upon his uncle, a wealthy citizen—

Shift. I don't like a city plot.

Sir Wil. I tell thee it is my own.

Shift. I beg pardon.

Sir Wil. My brother, I say, some time since wrote him a circumstantial account of my death; upon which he is return'd, in full expectation of succeeding to my estate.

Shift. Immediately?

Sir Wil. No; when at age. In about three months.

Shift. I understand you.

Sir Wil. Now, Sir, guessing into what hands my heedless boy would naturally fall on his return, I

have, in a feigned character, associated myself with a set of rascals, who will spread every bait that can flatter folly, inflame extravagance, allure inexperience, or catch credulity. And when, by their means, he thinks himself reduced to the last extremity; lost even to the most distant hope—

Shift. What then?

Sir Wil. Then will I step in, like his guardian-angel, and snatch him from perdition. If, mortified by misery, he becomes conscious of his errors, I have saved my son; but if, on the other hand, gratitude can't bind, nor ruin reclaim him, I will cast him out, as an alien to my blood, and trust for the support of my name and family to a remoter branch.

Shift. Bravely resolved. But what part am I to sustain in this drama?

Sir Wil. Why, George, you are to know, is already stript of what money he could command by two sharpers: but as I never trust them out of my sight, they can't deceive me.

Shift. Out of your sight!

Sir Wil. Why, I tell thee, I am one of the knot: an adept in their science; can slip, shuffle, cog, or cut with the best of 'em.

Shift. How do you escape your son's notice?

Sir Wil. His firm persuasion of my death, with the extravagance of my disguise.—Why, I would engage to elude your penetration, when I am beau'd out for the Baron. But of that by and bye. He has recourse, after his ill success, to the ten per cent. gentry, the usurers, for a farther supply.

Shift. Natural enough.

Sir Wil. Pray do you know,—I forget his name,—a wrinkled old fellow, in a thread-bare coat? He sits every morning, from twelve till two, in the left corner of Lloyd's coffee-house; and every evening, from five till eight, under the clock, at the Temple Exchange.

Shift. What, little Transfer, the broker?

Sir Wil. The same. Do you know him?

Shift. Know him! Aye, rot him. It was but last Easter Tuesday he had me turned out, at a feast in Leather-sellers' hall, for singing *Room for Cuckolds*, like a parrot; and vowed it meant a reflection upon the whole body corporate.

Sir Wil. You have reason to remember him.

Shift. 'Yes, yes, I recommended a Minor to him myself, for the loan only of fifty pounds; and, would you believe it, as I hope to be saved, we dined, supped, and wetted five and thirty guineas upon tick, in meetings at the Cross Keys, in order to settle the terms; and, after all, the scoundrel would not lend us a stiver.'

Sir Wil. Could you personate him?

Shift. Him! Oh, you shall see me shift into his shamle in a minute, and with a withered face, a bit of a purple nose, a cautionary stammer, and a sleek silver head, I would undertake to deceive even his banker. But to speak the truth, I have a friend that can do this inimitably well.' Have not you something of more consequence for me?

Sir Wil. I have. Could not you, Master Shift,

assume another shape? You have attended auctions?

Shift. Auctions! a constant puff. Deep in the mystery; a professed connoisseur, from a Nigger to a Nautilus; from the Apollo Belvidere to a Butterfly.

Sir Wil. One of these insinuating oily orators I will get you to personate; for we must have the plate and jewels in our possession, or they will soon fall into other hands.

Shift. I will do it.

Sir Wil. Within I'll give you farther instructions.

Shift. I'll follow you.

Sir Wil. (*Going, returns.*) You will want materials.

Shift. Oh, my dress I can be furnished with in five minutes. [*Exit Sir Wil.*] A whimsical old blade this. I shall laugh if this scheme miscarries. I have a strange mind to lend it a lift—never had a greater.—Pho, a damn'd unnatural connection this of mine!—What have I to do with fathers and guardians! a parcel of preaching, prudent, careful, curmudgeonly—dead to pleasures themselves, and the blasters of it in others.—Mere dogs in a manger—No, no, I'll veer, tack about, open my budget to the boy, and join in a counter-plot. But hold, hold, hold, friend Stephen, see first how the land lies. Who knows whether this Germanized genius has parts to comprehend, or spirit to reward thy merit. There's danger in that; ay, marry is there. 'Egad, before I shift the helm, I'll first examine the

coast ; and then, if there be but a bold shore and a good bottom, have a care, old Square Toes, you will meet with your match. [Exit.

Enter SIR GEORGE, LOADER, and SERVANT.

Sir Geo. Let the martin pannels for the vis-a-vis be carried to Long-acre, and the pye-balls sent to Hall's to be bitted—You will give me leave to be in your debt till the evening, Mr. Loader. I have just enough to discharge the Baron ; and we must, you know, be punctual with him, for the credit of the country.

Load. Fire him, a snub-nosed son of a bitch. Levant me, but he got enough last night to purchase a principality amongst his countrymen, the High-dutchians and Hussarians.

Sir Geo. You had your share, Mr. Loader.

Load. Who, I? Lurch me at four, but I was mark'd to the top of your trick by the Baron, my dear. What, I am no cinque and quatre man. Come, shall we have a dip in the history of the Four Kings this morning?

Sir Geo. Rather too early. Besides, it is the rule abroad, never to engage afresh till our old scores are discharged.

Load. Capot me, but those lads abroad are pretty fellows, let 'em say what they will. Here, Sir, they will vowel you, from father to son, to the twentieth generation. They would as soon now-a-days pay a tradesman's bill as a play debt. All sense of honour is gone, not a stiver stirring. They could as

soon raise the dead as two pounds two. Nick me, but I have a great mind to tie up, and ruin the rascals.—What, has Transfer been here this morning?

Enter DICK.

Sir Geo. Any body here this morning, Dick?

Dick. Nobody, your honour.

Load. Repique the rascal. He promised to be here before me.

Dick. I beg your honour's pardon. Mrs. Cole from the Piazza was here between seven and eight.

Sir Geo. An early hour for a lady of her calling.

Dick. Mercy on me! The poor gentlewoman is mortally altered since we used to lodge there, in our jaunts from Oxford; wrapt up in flannels; all over the rheumatiss.

Load. Ay, ay, old Moll is at her last stake.

Dick. She bade me say, she just stopt in her way to the Tabernacle; after the exhortation, she says, she'll call again.

Sir Geo. Exhortation! Oh, I recollect. Well, whilst they only make proselytes from that profession, they are heartily welcome to them. She does not mean to make me a convert?

Dick. I believe she has some such design upon me; for she offered me a book of hymns, a shilling, and a dram, to go along with her.

Sir Geo. No bad scheme, Dick. Thou hast a fine, sober, psalm-singing countenance; and when thou hast been some time in their trammels, may'st make as able a teacher as the best of them.

Dick. Laud, Sir, I want learning.

Sir Geo. Oh, the spirit, the spirit, will supply all that, Dick ; never fear.

Enter SIR WILLIAM as a German Baron.

My dear Baron, what news from the Haymarket ? What says the Florenza ? Does she yield ? Shall I be happy ? Say yes, and command my fortune.

Sir Wil. I was never did see so fine a woman since I was leave Hamburgh ; dere was all de colour, all red and white, dat was quite natural ; point d'artifice. Then she was dance and sing—I vow to heaven, I was never see de like !

Sir Geo. But how did she receive my embassy ? What hopes ?

Sir Wil. Why dere was, Monsieur le Chevalier, when I first enter, dree or four damn'd queer people ; ah, ah, dought I, by Gad I guess your business. Dere was one fat big woman's, dat I know long time : le valet de chambre was tell me dat she came from a grand merchand ; ha, ha, dought I, by your leave, stick to your shop ; or, if you must have de pretty girl, dere is de play-hous, dat do very well for you ; but for de opera, pardonnez, by Gar, dat is meat for your master.

Sir Geo. Insolent mechanic !—But she despis'd him ?

Sir Wil. Ah, ma foy, he is damn'd rich, has beaucoup de guineas ; but after de fat woman was go, I was tell the Signora, Madam, der is one certain Chevalier of dis country, who has travell'd,

see de world, bien fait, well made, beaucoup d'esprit, a great deal of monies, who beg, by Gar, to have de honour to drow himself at your feet.

Sir Geo. Well, well, Baron.

Sir Wil. She aska your name : as soon as I tell her, aha, by Gar, dans an instant she melt like de lomp of sugar : she run to her beureau, and, in de minute, return wid de paper.

Sir Geo. Give it me.

Les preliminaries d'une traité entre le Chevalier Wealthy and la Signora Diamanti.

A bagatelle, a trifle : she shall have it.

Load. Hark'e, Knight, what is all that there outlandish stuff ?

Sir Geo. Read, read ! the eloquence of angels, my dear Baron !

Load. Slam me but the man's mad ! I don't understand their gibberish.—What is it in English ?

Sir Geo. The preliminaries of a subsidy treaty between Sir G. Wealthy and Signora Florenza ; that the said Signora will resign the possession of her person to the said Sir George, on the payment of three hundred guineas monthly, for equipage, table, domestics, dress, dogs, and diamonds ; her debts to be duly discharged, and a note advanced of five hundred by way of entrance.

Load. Zounds, what a cormorant ! She must be devilish handsome.

Sir Geo. I am told so.

Load. Told so ! Why, did you never see her ?

Sir Geo. No; and possibly never may, but from my box at the opera.

Load. Hey day! Why what the devil.—

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, you stare; I don't wonder at it. This is an elegant refinement, unknown to the gross voluptuaries of this part of the world. This is, Mr. Loader, what may be called a debt to your dignity: for an opera girl is as essential a piece of equipage for a man of fashion as his coach.

Load. The devil!

Sir Geo. 'Tis for the vulgar only to enjoy what they possess: the distinction of ranks and conditions are, to have hounds, and never hunt; cooks, and dine at taverns; houses, you never inhabit; mistresses, you never enjoy—

Load. And debts, you never pay. Egad, I am not surpriz'd at it; if this be your trade, no wonder that you want money for necessaries, when you give such a damn'd deal for nothing at all.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Mrs. Cole, to wait upon your honour.

Sir Geo. My dear baron, run, dispatch my affair, conclude my treaty, and thank her for the very reasonable conditions.

Sir Wil. I sall.

Sir Geo. Mr. Loader, shall I trouble you to introduce the lady? she is, I think, your acquaintance.

Load. Who, old Moll? Ay, ay, she's your market-woman. I wou'd not give sixpence for your Signoras. One armful of good wholesome British

beauty, is worth a ship load of their trapping, tawdry trollops. But hark'e Baron, how much for the table. Why she must have a devilish large family, or a monstrous stomach.

Sir Wil. Ay, ay, dere is her moder, la complaisante to walk in de park, and to go to de play; two broders, deux valets, dree Spanish lap-dogs, and de monkey.

Load. Strip me if I would set five shillings against the whole gang. May my partner renounce with the game in his hand, if I were you, Knight, if I would not——

Sir Geo. But the lady waits. [*Ex. Load.*] A strange fellow this. What a whimsical jargon he talks. Not an idea abstracted from play. To say truth, I am sincerely sick of my acquaintance; But, however, I have the first people in the kingdom to keep me in countenance. Death and the dice level all distinctions.

Enter MRS. COLE, supported by LOADER and DICK.

Mrs. Cole. Gently, gently, good Mr Loader.

Load. Come along, old Moll. Why you jade, you look as rosy this morning, I must have a smack at your muns. Here, taste her, she is as good as old hock to get you a stomach.

Mrs. Cole. Fie, Mr Loader, I thought you had forgot me.

Load. I forget you! I would as soon forget what is trumps.

Mrs. Cole. Softly, softly, young man. There, there, mighty well. And how does your honour do? I hant seen your honour the—Oh! mercy on me, there's a twinge—

Sir Geo. What's the matter, Mrs. Cole?

Mrs. Cole. My old disorder, the rhumatise; I hant been able to get a wink of—Oh la!—What, you have been in town these two days?

Sir Geo. Since Wednesday.

Mrs. Cole. And never once called upon old Colde? No, no, I am worn out, thrown by, and forgotten, like a tatter'd garment, as Mr. Squintum says. Oh, he is a dear man! But for him I had been a lost sheep; never known the comforts of the new birth; no.—There's your old friend Kitty Carrot at home still. What, shall we see you this evening? I have kept the Green Room for you ever since I heard you were in town.

Load. What, shall we take a snap at old Moll's? Hey, Beldam, have you a good batch of burgundy abroad?

Mrs. Cole. Bright as a ruby; and for flavour! You know the colonel—He and Jenny Cummins drank three flasks, hand to fist, last night.

Load. What, and bilk thee of thy share?

Mrs. Cole. Ah, don't mention it, Mr. Loader. No, that's all over with me. The time has been, when I could have earned thirty shillings a-day by my own drinking, and the next morning was neither sick nor sorry: but now, O land, a thimble-full turns me topsy-turvy.

Loader. Poor old girl!

Mrs. Cole. Ay, I have done with these idle vanities; my thoughts are fixed upon a better place. What, I suppose, Mr. Loader, you will be for your old friend the black-ey'd girl from Rosemary-lane. Ha, ha! Well, 'tis a merry little tit, A thousand pities she's such a reprobate!—But she'll mend; her time is not come: all shall have their call, as Mr. Squintum says, sooner or later; regeneration is not the work of a day. No, no, no.—Oh!

Sir George. Not worse, I hope.

Mrs. Cole. Rack, rack, gnaw, gnaw, never easy, a-bed or up, all's one. Pray, honest friend, have you any clary or mint-water in the house?

Dick. A case of French drams.

Mrs. Cole. Heaven defend me! I would not touch a dram for the world.

Sir George. They are but cordials, Mrs. Cole. Fetch 'em, you blockhead. *Exit Dick.*

Mrs. Cole. Ay, I am a-going; a-wasting, and a-wasting, Sir George. What will become of the house when I am gone, heaven knows!—No.—When people are missed, then they are mourned. Sixteen years have I lived in the Garden, comfortably and creditably; and, though I say it, could have got bail any hour of the day: Reputable tradesmen, Sir George, neighbours, Mr. Loader knows; no knock-me-down doings in my house. A set of regular, sedate, sober customers. No rioters. Sixteen did I say—Ay, eighteen years have I paid scot and lot in the parish of St. Paul's; and, during the whole

time, nobody have said, Mrs. Cole, why do you so? Unless twice that I was before Sir Thomas De Val, and three times in the round-house.

Sir George. Nay, don't weep, Mrs. Cole.

Load. May I lose deal, with an honour at bottom, if old Moll does not bring tears into my eyes.

Mrs. Cole. However, it is a comfort, after all, to think one has passed thro' the world with credit and character. Ay, a good name, as Mr. Squintum says, is better than a gallipot of ointment.

Enter DICK with a dram.

Load. Come, haste, Dick, haste; sorrow is dry. Here, Moll, shall I fill thee a bumper?

Mrs. Cole. Hold, hold, Mr. Loader! Heaven help you, I could as soon swallow the Thames. Only a sip to keep the gout out of my stomach.

Load. Why then, here's to thee.—Levant me, but it is supernaculum.—Speak when you have enough.

Mrs. Cole. I won't trouble you for the glass; my hands do so tremble and shake, I shall but spill the good creature.

Load. Well pulled. But now to business. Prithree, Moll, did not I see a tight young wench, in a linen gown, knock at your door this morning?

Mrs. Cole. Ay; a young thing from the country.

Load. Could we not get a peep at her this evening?

Mrs. Cole. Impossible! She is engaged to Sir Timothy Trotter. I have taken earnest for her this three months.

Load. Pho, what signifies such a fellow as that !
Tip him an old trader, and give her to the knight.

Mrs. Cole. Tip him an old trader !—Mercy on us,
where do you expect to go when you die, Mr. Loader ?

Load. Crop me, but this Squintum has turned her
brains.

Sir Geo. Nay, Mr. Loader, I think the gentleman
has wrought a most happy reformation.

Mrs. Cole. Oh, it was a wonderful work. There
had I been tossing in a sea of sin, without rudder or
compass. And had not the good gentleman piloted
me into the harbour of grace, I must have struck
against the rocks of reprobation, and have been quite
swallowed up in the whirlpool of despair. He was
the precious instrument of my spiritual sprinkling.—
But however, Sir George, if your mind be set upon
a young country thing, to-morrow night, I helieve,
I can furnish you.

Load. As how ?

Mrs. Cole. I have advertised this morning in the
register-office for servants under seventeen ; and ten
to one but I light on something that will do.

Load. Pillory me but it has a face.

Mrs. Cole. Truly, consistently with my conscience,
I would do any thing for your honour.

Sir Geo. Right, Mrs. Cole, never lose sight of
that monitor. But, pray, how long has this heavenly
change been wrought in you ?

Mrs. Cole. Ever since my last visitation of the gout.
Upon my first fit, seven years ago, I began to have

my doubts and my waverings; but I was lost in a labyrinth, and nobody to show me the road. One time I thought of dying a Roman, which is truly a comfortable communion enough for one of us: but it would not do.

Sir Geo. Why not?

Mrs. Cole. I went one summer over to Boulogne to repent; and, would you believe it, the bare-footed, bald-pated beggars would not give me absolution without I quitted my business——Did you ever hear of such a set of scabby——Besides, I could not bear their barbarity. Would you believe it, Mr. Loader, they lock up for their lives, in a nunnery, the prettiest, sweetest, tender, young things:——Oh, six of them, for a season, would finish my business here, and then I should have nothing to do but to think of hereafter.

Load. Brand me, what a country!

Sir Geo. Oh, scandalous!

Mrs. Cole. O no, it would not do. So, in my last illness, I was wish'd to Mr. Squintum; who stept in with his saving grace, got me with the new-birth, and I became, as you see, regenerate, and another creature.

Enter. DICK.

Dick. Mr. Transfer, Sir, has sent to know if your honour be at home.

Sir Geo. Mrs. Cole, I am mortified to part with you. But business, you know——

Mrs. Cole. True, Sir George. Mr. Loader, your arm——Gently, oh, oh!

Sir Geo. Would you take another thimbleful, Mrs. Cole.

Mrs. Cole. Not a drop—I shall see you this evening.

Sir Geo. Depend upon me.

Mrs. Cole. To-morrow I hope to suit you—We are to have, at the Tabernacle, an occasional hymn, with a thanksgiving sermon for my recovery. After which, I shall call at the register-office, and see what goods my advertisement has brought in.

Sir Geo. Extremely obliged to you, Mrs. Cole.

Mrs. Cole. Or if that should not do, I have a tit-bit at home will suit your stomach. Never brushed by a beard. Well, heaven bless you—Softly, have a care, Mr. Loader—Richard, you may as well give me the bottle into the chair, for fear I should be taken ill on the road. Gently—so, so!

[*Exit. Mrs. Cole and Loader.*]

‘ *Sir Geo.* Dick, show Mr. Transfer in—Ha, ha, what a hodge podge! How the jade has jumbled together the carnal and the spiritual!—with what ease she reconciles her new birth to her old calling! No wonder these preachers have plenty of proselytes, whilst they have the address so comfortably to blend the hitherto jarring interests of the two worlds.

‘ *Enter LOADER.*

‘ *Load.* Well, knight, I have housed her; but they want you within, Sir.

‘ *Sir Geo.* I’ll go to them immediately. [*Exeunt.*]

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II.

Enter DICK, introducing TRANSFER.

Dick.

MY master will come to you presently. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir GEORGE.

Sir Geo. Mr. Transfer, your servant.

Trans. Your honour's very humble. I thought to have found Mr. Loader here.

Sir Geo. He will return immediately. Well, Mr. Transfer—but take a chair—you have had a long walk. Mr. Loader, I presume, opened to you the urgency of my business.

Trans. Ay, ay, the general cry, money, money! I don't know, for my part, where all the money is flown to. Formerly a note, with a tolerable endorsement, was as current as cash. If your uncle Richard now would join in this security—

Sir Geo. Impossible.

Trans. Ay, like enough. I wish you were of age.

Sir Geo. So do I. But as that will be considered in the premium—

Trans. True, true—I see you understand business—And what sum does your honour lack at present?

Sir Geo. Lack!—How much have you brought!

Trans. Who, I? Dear me, none!

Sir Geo. Zounds, none!

Trans. Lack-a-day, none to be had, I think. All the morning have I been upon the hunt. There, Ephraim Barebones, the tallow-chandler in Thames-street, us'd to be a never-failing chap; not a guinea to be got there. Then I totter'd away to Nebuchadnezzar Zebulon, in the Old Jewry; but it happen'd to be Saturday; and they never touch on the Sabbath, you know.

Sir Geo. Why, what the devil can I do?

Trans. Good me, I did not know your honour had been so pressed.

Sir Geo. My honour pressed! Yes, my honour is not only pressed, but ruined, unless I can raise money to redeem it. That blockhead Loader, to depend upon this old doating——

Trans. Well, well, now I declare I am quite sorry to see your honour in such a taking.

Sir Geo. Damn your sorrow.

Trans. But come, don't be cast down: Tho' money is not to be had, money's worth may, and that's the same thing.

Sir Geo. How, dear Transfer?

Trans. Why, I have, at my warehouse in the city, ten casks of whale-blubber, a large cargo of Dantzick dowlass, with a curious sortment of Birmingham hafts, and Whitney blankets for exportation.

Sir Geo. Hey!

Trans. And stay, stay; then, again, at my country-house, the bottom of Gray's-inn-lane, there's a hundred ton of fine old hay, only damaged a little

last winter for want of thatching ; with forty load of flint-stones.

Sir Geo. Well.

Trans. Your honour may have all these for a reasonable profit, and convert them into cash.

Sir Geo. Blubber and blankets ! Why, you old rascal, do you banter me ?

Trans. Who, I ? O la ! marry, heaven forbid.

Sir Geo. Get out of my—you stuttering scoundrel.

Trans. If your honour wou'd but hear me—

Sir Geo. Troop, I say, unless you have a mind to go a shorter way than you came. [*Ex. Tr.*] And yet there is something so uncommonly ridiculous in his proposal, that, were my mind more at ease—
[*Enter LOADER.*] So, Sir, you have recommended me to a fine fellow.

Load. What's the matter ?

Sir Geo. He can't supply me with a shilling ! and wants, besides, to make me a dealer in dowlass.

Load. Ay, and a very good commodity too. People that are upon ways and means must not be nice, knight. A pretty piece of work you have made here ! Thrown up the cards with the game in your hands.

Sir Geo. Why, prithee, of what use wou'd his—

Load. Use ! of every use. Procure you the spankers, my boy. I have a broker, that, in a twinkling, shall take off your bargain.

Sir Geo. Indeed !

Load. Indeed ! Ay, indeed. You sit down to hazard and not know the chances ! I'll call him back.

—Hollo, Transfer.—A pretty, little, busy, bustling—You may travel miles before you will meet with his match. If there is one pound in the city he will get it. He creeps, like a ferret, into their bags, and makes the yellow-boys bolt again.

Enter TRANSFER.

Come hither, little Transfer; what, man, our minor was a little too hasty; he did not understand trap: knows nothing of the game, my dear.

Trans. What I said was to serve Sir George: as he seemed——

Lord. I told him so. Well, well, we will take thy commodities, were they as many more. But try, prithee, if thou could'st not procure us some of the ready for present spending.

Trans. Let me consider.

Lord. Ay, do: come, shuffle thy brains; never fear the Baronet. To let a lord of lands want shiners; 'tis a shame.

Trans. I do recollect, in this quarter of the town, an old friend that used to do things in this way.

Lord. Who?

Trans. Statute the scrivener.

Lord. Slam me, but he has nicked the chance.

Trans. A hard man, master Loader.

Sir Geo. No matter.

Trans. His demands are exorbitant.

Sir Geo. That is no fault of ours.

Lord. Well said, knight!

Trans. But, to save time, I had better mention his terms.

Load. Unnecessary.

Trans. Five per cent. legal interest.

Sir Geo. He shall have it.

Trans. Ten, the premium.

Sir Geo. No more words.

Trans. Then, as you are not of age, five more for insuring your life.

Load. We will give it.

Trans. As for what he will demand for the risk—

Sir Geo. He shall be satisfied.

Trans. You pay the attorney.

Sir Geo. Amply, amply. Loader, dispatch him.

Load. There, there, little Transfer; now, every thing is settled. All terms shall be complied with, reasonable or unreasonable. What, our principal is a man of honour. [*Exit Tr.*] Hey, my knight, this is doing business. This pinch is a sure card.

Re-enter TRANSFER.

Trans. I had forgot one thing. I am not the principal; you pay the brokerage.

Load. Ay, ay; and a handsome present into the bargain, never fear.

Trans. Enough, enough.

Load. Hark'e, Transfer, we'll take the Birmingham hafts and Whitney wares.

Trans. They shall be forthcoming.—You would not have the hay, with the flints?

Load. Every pebble of 'em. The magistrates of

the Baronet's borough are infirm and gouty. He shall deal them as new pavement. [*Exit Tr.*] So, that's settled. I believe, knight, I can lend you a helping hand as to the last article. I know some traders that will truck: fellows with finery. Not commodities of such clumsy conveyance as old Transfer's.

Sir Geo. You are very obliging.

Load. I'll do it, boy; and get you, into the bargain a bonny auctioneer, that shall dispose of 'em all in a crack. [*Exit.*]

Enter DICK.

Dick. Your uncle, Sir, has been waiting some time.

Sir Geo. He comes in a lucky hour. Show him in. [*Exit Dick.*] Now for a lecture. My situation shan't sink my spirits, however. Here comes the musty trader, running over with remonstrances. I must banter the cit.

Enter RICHARD WEALTHY.

R. Weal. So, Sir; what, I suppose this is a spice of your foreign breeding, to let your uncle kick his heels in your hall, whilst your presence-chamber is crouded with pimps, bawds, and gamesters.

Sir Geo. Oh, a proof of my respect, dear uncle. Would it have been decent now, uncle, to have introduced you into such company?

R. Weal. Wonderfully considerate. Well, young man, and what do you think will be the end of all this? Here I have received by the last mail a quire

of your drafts from abroad. I see you are determined our neighbours should taste of your magnificence.

Sir Geo. Yes, I think I did some credit to my country.

R. Weal. And how are all these to be paid?

Sir Geo. That I submit to you, dear uncle.

R. Weal. From me!—Not a souze to keep you from the counter.

Sir Geo. Why then let the scoundrels stay. It is their duty. I have other demands, debts of honour, which must be discharged.

R. Weal. Here's a diabolical distinction! Here's a prostitution of words!—Honour! 'Sdeath, that a rascal who has picked your pocket shall have his crime gilded with the most sacred distinction, and his plunder punctually paid, whilst the industrious mechanic, who ministers to your very wants, shall have his debt delayed, and his demand treated as insolent.

Sir Geo. Oh! a truce to this thread-bare trumpery, dear uncle.

R. Weal. I confess my folly! but make yourself easy; you won't be troubled with many more of my visits. I own I was weak enough to design a short expostulation with you; but as we in the city know the true value of time, I shall take care not to squander away any more of it upon you.

Sir Geo. A prudent resolution.

R. Weal. One commission, however, I can't dispense with myself from executing.—It was agreed between your father and me, that as he had but one son and I one daughter—

Sir Geo. Your gettings should be added to his estate, and my cousin Margery and I squat down together in the comfortable state of matrimony.

R. Weal. Puppy! Such was our intencion. Now, his last will claims this contract.

Sir Geo. Dispatch, dear uncle.

R. Weal. Why then, in a word, see me here demand the execution.

Sir Geo. What d'ye mean? For me to marry Margery?

R. Weal. I do.

Sir Geo. What, moi—me?

R. Weal. You, you—Your answer, ay or no?

Sir Geo. Why then, concisely and briefly, without evasion, equivocation, or further circumlocution,—No.

R. Weal. I am glad of it.

Sir Geo. So am I.

R. Weal. But pray, if it would not be too great a favour, what objections can you have to my daughter? Not that I want to remove 'em, but merely out of curiosity, What objections?

Sir Geo. None. I neither know her, have seen her, inquir'd after her, or ever intend it.

R. Weal. What, perhaps I am the stumbling block?

Sir Geo. You have hit it.

R. Weal. Ay, now we come to the point. Well, and pray—

Sir Geo. Why, it is not so much a dislike to your person, though that is exceptionable enough; but

your profession, dear uncle, is an insuperable obstacle.

R. Weal. Good lack! And what harm has that done, pray?

Sir Geo. Done! so stained, polluted, and tainted the whole mass of your blood, thrown such a blot on your 'scutcheon, as ten regular successions can hardly efface.

R. Weal. The deuce!

Sir Geo. And could you now, consistently with your duty as a faithful guardian, recommend my union with the daughter of a trader?

R. Weal. Why, indeed, I ask pardon; I am afraid I did not weigh the matter as maturely as I ought.

Sir Geo. Oh, a horrid, barbarous scheme!

R. Weal. But then I thought her having the honour to partake of the same flesh and blood with yourself might prove, in some measure, a kind of fallers-earth, to scour out the dirty spots contracted by commerce.

Sir Geo. Impossible!

R. Weal. Besides, here, it has been the practice even of peers.

Sir Geo. Don't mention the unnatural intercourse! Thank Heaven, Mr. Richard Wealthy, my education has been in another country, where I have been too well instructed in the value of nobility to think of intermixing it with the offspring of a Bourgeois. Why, what apology could I make to my children for giving them such a mother?

R. Weal. I did not think of that. Then I must despair, I am afraid.

Sir Geo. I can afford but little hopes. Tho', upon recollection—Is the grisette pretty?

R. Weal. A parent may be partial. She is thought so.

Sir Geo. Ah, *la jolie petite Bourgeoise!* Poor girl, I sincerely pity her. And I suppose, to procure her emersion from the mercantile mud, no consideration wou'd be spar'd.

R. Weal. Why, to be sure, for such an honour one wou'd strain a point.

Sir Geo. Why then, not totally to destroy your hopes, I do recollect an edict in favour of Brittany; that when a man of distinction engages in commerce, his nobility is suffered to sleep.

R. Weal. Indeed!

Sir Geo. And, upon his quitting the contagious connection, he is permitted to resume his rank.

R. Weal. That's fortunate.

Sir Geo. So, nuncle Richard, if you will sell out of the stocks, shut up your counting-house, and quit St. Mary-axe for Grosvenor-square—

R. Weal. What then?

Sir Geo. Why, when your rank has had time to rouse itself, for I think your nobility, nuncle, has had a pretty long nap, if the girl's person is pleasing, and the purchase-money is adequate to the honour, I may in time be prevailed upon to restore her to the right of her family.

R. Weal. Amazing condescension.

Sir Geo. Good-nature is my foible. But, upon my soul, I would not have gone so far for any body else.

R. Weal. I can contain no longer. Hear me, spendthrift, prodigal, do you know, that in ten days your whole revenue won't purchase you a feather to adorn your empty head?—

Sir Geo. Heyday! what's the matter now?

R. Weal. And that you derive every acre of your boasted patrimony from your great-uncle, a soap-boiler!

Sir Geo. Infamous aspersion!

R. Weal. It was his bags, the fruits of his honest industry, that preserved your lazy, beggarly nobility. His wealth repaired your tottering hall, from the ruins of which even the rats had run.

Sir Geo. Better our name had perished! Insupportable! soap-boiling, uncle!

R. Weal. Traduce a trader in the country of commerce! It is treason against the community; and, for your punishment, I would have you restored to the sordid condition from whence we drew you, and, like your predecessors the Piets, stript, painted, and fed upon hips, haws, and blackberries.

Sir Geo. A truce, dear haberdasher.

R. Weal. One pleasure I have, that to this goal you are upon the gallop; but have a care, the sword hangs but by a thread. When next we meet, know me for the master of your fate. [Exit.

Sir Geo. Insolent mechanic! But that his Bourgeois blood would have soiled my sword—

Enter BARON and LOADER.

Sir Wil. What is de matter?

Sir Geo. A fellow here, upon the credit of a little affinity, has dar'd to upbraid me with being sprung from a soap-boiler.

Sir Wil. Vat, you from the boiler of soap?

Sir Geo. Mel

Sir Wil. Aha, begar, dat is anoder ting—And harka you, Mister Monsieur, ha—how dare a you have d'affrontary—

Sir Geo. How?

Sir Wil. De impertinence to sit down, play wid me?

Sir Geo. What is this?

Sir Wil. A beggarly Bourgeois vis-a-vis, a Baron of twenty descents.

Load. But, Baron—

Sir Wil. Bygar, I am almost ashamed to win of such a low, dirty—Give me my monies, and let a me never see your face.

Load. Why, but Baron, you mistake this thing; I know the old buck this fellow prates about.

Sir Wil. May be.

Load. Pigeon me, as true a gentleman as the Grand Signior. He was, indeed, a good-natur'd, obliging, friendly fellow; and being a great judge of soap, tar, and train-oil, he us'd to have it home to his house, and sell it to his acquaintances for ready money, to serve them.

Sir Wil. Was dat all?

Load. Upon my honour.

Sir Wil. Oh dat, dat is anoder ting. Bygar I was afraid he was negotiant.

Load. Nothing like it.

Enter DICK.

Dick. A gentleman to enquire for Mr. Loader.

[Exit.

Load. I come—A pretty son-of-a-bitch this Baron! Pimps for the man, picks his pocket, and then wants to kick him out of company, because his uncle was an oilman.

[Exit.

Sir Wil. I beg pardon, Chevalier, I was mistake.

Sir Geo. Oh, don't mention it; had the flam been fact, your behaviour was natural enough.

Enter LOADER.

Load. Mr. Smirk, the auctioneer.

Sir Geo. Show him in by all means.

[Exit Loader.

Sir Wil. You have affair.

Sir Geo. If you'll walk into the next room, they will be finished in five minutes. *[Exit Sir William.*

Enter LOADER, with SHIFT as SMIRK.

Load. Here master Smirk, this is the gentleman. Hark'e, Knight, did I not tell you old Moll was your mark? Here she has brought you a pretty piece of man's meat already; as sweet as a nosegay, and as ripe as a cherry, you rogue. Dispatch him, mean time we'll manage the girl.

[Exit.

Smirk. You are the principal.

Sir Geo. Eyen so. I have, Mr. Smirk, some things of a considerable value, which I want to dispose of immediately.

Smirk. You have?

Sir Geo. Could you assist me ?

Smirk. Doubtless.

Sir Geo. But directly ?

Smirk. We have an auction at twelve. I'll add your cargo to the catalogue.

Sir Geo. Can that be done ?

Smirk. Every day's practice : it is for the credit of the sale. Last week, amongst the valuable effects of a gentleman going abroad, I sold a choice collection of china, with a curious service of plate ; though the real party was never master of above two Delf dishes and a dozen of pewter in all his life.

Sir Geo. Very artificial. But this must be concealed.

Smirk. Bury'd here. Oh, many an aigrette and solitaire have I sold, to discharge a lady's play debt. But then we must know the parties, otherwise it might be knock'd down to the husband himself.—Ha, ha.—Hey ho !

Sir Geo. True. Upon my word, your profession requires parts.

Smirk. Nobody's more. Did you ever hear, Sir George, what first brought me into the business ?

Sir Geo. Never.

Smirk. Quite an accident, as I may say. You must have known my predecessor, Mr. Prig, the greatest man in the world in his way, aye, or that ever was, or ever will be ; quite a jewel of a man : he would touch you up a lot ; there was no resisting him. He would force you to bid whether you would or no. I shall never see his equal.

Sir Geo. You are modest, Mr. Smirk.

Smirk. No, no, but his shadow. Far be it from me to vie with that great man. But as I was saying, my predecessor Mr. Prig, was to have a sale, as it might be on a Saturday. On Friday, at noon, I shall never forget the day, he was suddenly seized with a violent cholic. He sent for me to his bed-side, squeez'd me by the hand; dear Smirk, said he, what an accident! You know what is to-morrow; the greatest show this season; prints, pictures, bronzes, butterflies, medals, and minionettes, all the world will be there; Lady Dy Joss, Mrs. Nankyn, the Duchess of Dupe, and every body at all: you see my state, it will be impossible for me to mount. What can I do? It was not for me you know to advise that great man.

Sir Geo. No, no.

Smirk. At last, looking wishfully at me, Smirk, says he, d'you love me?—Mr. Prig, can you doubt it?—I'll put it to the test, says he; supply my place to-morrow.—I, eager to show my love, rashly and rapidly replied,—I will.

Sir Geo. That was bold.

Smirk. Absolute madness! But I had gone too far to recede. Then the point was, to prepare for the awful occasion. The first want that occurred to me was a wig, but this was too material an article to depend on my own judgment; I resolved to consult my friends. I told them the affair—You hear, gentlemen, what has happened; Mr. Prig, one of the greatest men in his way the world ever saw, or ever will, quite a jewel of a man, taken with a violent fit

of the cholic; to-morrow, the greatest show this season; prints, pictures, bronzes, butterflies, medals, and minionettes; every body in the world to be there; Lady Dy Joss, Mrs. Nankyn, Duchess of Dupe, and all mankind: it being impossible he should mount, I have consented to sell—They star'd—it is true, gentlemen. Now I should be glad to have your opinions as to a wig. They were divided: some recommended a tye, others a bag; one mentioned a bob, but was soon over rul'd. Now, for my part, I own I rather inclin'd to the bag; but to avoid the imputation of rashness, I resolved to take Mrs. Smirk's judgment, my wife, a dear good woman, fine in figure, high in taste, a superior genius, and knows old china like a Nabob.

Sir Geo. What was her decision?

Smirk. I told her the case.—My dear, you know what has happened. My good friend Mr. Prig, the greatest man in the world, in his way, that ever was, or ever will be, quite a jewel of a man, a violent fit of the cholic—the greatest show this season to-morrow, pictures, and every thing in the world; all the world will be there: now, as it is impossible he should, I mount in his stead. You know the importance of a wig; I have ask'd my friends—some recommended a tye, others a bag,—what is your opinion? Why, to deal freely, Mr. Smirk, says she, a tye for your round, regular, smiling face, would be rather too formal, and a bag rather too boyish, deficient in dignity for the solemn occasion; were I worthy to advise, you should wear a something between both.—

I'll be hang'd if you don't mean a major. I jump at the hint, and a major it was.

Sir Geo. So, that was fixt.

Smirk. Finally. But next day when I came to mount the rostrum, then was the trial. My limbs shook, and my tongue trembled. The first lot was a chamber-utensil, in Chelsea china, of the pea-green pattern. It occasioned a great laugh; but I got through it. Her Grace, indeed, gave me great encouragement. I overheard her whisper to Lady Dy, upon my word Mr. Smirk does it very well. Very well, indeed, Mr. Smirk, addressing herself to me. I made an acknowledging bow to her Grace, as in duty bound. But one flower flounced involuntarily from me that day, as I may say. I remember Dr. Trifle called it enthusiastic, and pronounc'd it a pre-sage of my future greatness.

Sir Geo. What was that?

Smirk. Why, Sir, the lot was a guido? a single figure, a marvellous fine performance; well preserv'd, and highly finish'd. It stuck at five-and-forty; I, charm'd with the picture and piqu'd at the people, A-going for five-and-forty, nobody more than five-and-forty:—Pray Ladies and Gentlemen, look at this piece, quite flesh and blood, and only wants a touch from the torch of Prometheus to start from the canvass and fall a bidding. A general plaudit ensu'd; I bow'd, and in three minutes knock'd it down at sixty-three, ten.

Sir Geo. That was a stroke at least equal to your master.

Smirk. O dear me! you did not know the great man, alike in every thing. He had as much to say upon a ribbon as a Raphael. His manner too was inimitably fine. I remember, they took him off at the play-house, some time ago; pleasant, but wrong. Public characters should not be sported with—They are sacred—But we lose time.

Sir Geo. Oh, in the lobby, on the table, you will find the particulars.

Smirk. We shall see you. There will be a world of company. I shall please you. But the great nicety of our art is, the eye. Mark how mine skims round the room. Some bidders are shy, and only advance with a nod; but I nail them. One, two, three, four, five. You will be surpriz'd—Ha, ha, ha,—heigh ho! [Exeunt.

THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

Enter SIR GEORGE and LOADER.

Sir George.

A MOST infernal run. Let's see. (*Pulls out a card*). Loader a thousand, the Baron two, Tally — Enough to beggar a banker. Every shilling of Transfer's supply exhausted! nor will even the sale of my moveables prove sufficient to discharge my debts. Death and the devil! In what a complication of calamities has a few days plung'd me! And no resource!

Load. Knight, here's old Moll come to wait on you; she has brought the tid-bit I spoke of. Shall I bid her send her in?

Sir Geo. Pray do.

[*Exit Loader.*]

Enter Mrs. COLE and LUCY.

Mrs. Cole. Come along Lucy. You bashful baggage, I thought I had silenc'd your scruples. Don't you remember what Mr. Squintum said? A woman's not worth saving, that won't be guilty of a swinging sin; for then they have matter to repent upon. Here, your honour, I leave her to your management. She is young, tender, and timid! does not know what is for her own good: but your honour will soon teach her. I would willingly stay, but I must not lose the lecture.

[*Exit.*]

Sir Geo. Upon my credit, a fine figure! Awkward—Can't produce her publicly as mine! but she will do for private amusement—Will you be seated, Miss?—Dumb! quite a picture! She too wants a touch of the Promethean torch—Will you be so kind, Ma'am, to walk from your frame and take a chair?—Come, prithee, why so coy? Nay, I am not very adroit in the custom of this country. I suppose I must conduct you—Come, Miss.

Lucy. O, Sir!

Sir Geo. Child!

Lucy. If you have any humanity, spare me.

Sir Geo. In tears! What can this mean! Artifice. A project to raise the price, I suppose. Look'e, my dear, you may save this piece for another occasion. It won't do with me; I am no novice—So, child, a truce to your tragedy, I beg.

Lucy. Indeed you wrong me, Sir; indeed you do.

Sir Geo. Wrong you! how came you here, and for what purpose?

Lucy. A shameful one. I know it all; and yet believe me, Sir, I am innocent.

Sir Geo. Oh, I don't question that. Your pious patroness is a proof of your innocence.

Lucy. What can I say to gain your credit? And yet, Sir, strong as appearances are against me, by all that's holy, you see me here, a poor distrest, involuntary victim.

Sir Geo. Her style's above the common class; her tears are real.—Rise, child.—How the poor creature trembles!

Lucy. Say then I am safe.

Sir Geo. Fear nothing.

Lucy. May Heaven reward you.—I cannot.

Sir Geo. Prithee, child, collect yourself, and help me to unravel this mystery. You came hither willingly? There was no force?

Lucy. None.

Sir Geo. You know Mrs. Cole

Lucy. Too well.

Sir Geo. How came you then to trust her?

Lucy. Mine, Sir, is a tedious melancholy tale.

Sir Geo. And artless too?

Lucy. As innocence.

Sir Geo. Give it me.

Lucy. It will tire you.

Sir Geo. Not if it be true. Be just, and you will find me generous.

Lucy. On that, Sir, I rely'd in venturing hither.

Sir Geo. You did me justice. Trust me with all your story. If you deserve, depend upon my protection.

Lucy. Some months ago, Sir, I was consider'd as the joint heiress of a respectable wealthy merchant; dear to my friends, happy in my prospects, and my father's favourite.

Sir Geo. His name.

Lucy. There you must pardon me. Unkind and cruel tho' he has been to me, let me discharge the duty of a daughter; suffer in silence, nor bring reproach on him who gave me being.

Sir Geo. I applaud your piety.

Lucy. At this happy period, my father, judging an addition of wealth must bring an increase of happiness, resolved to unite me with a man sordid in his mind, brutal in his manners, and riches his only recommendation. My refusal of this ill-suited match, though mildly given, enflamed my father's temper, naturally choleric, alienated his affections, and banish'd me his house, distress and destitute.

Sir Geo. Wou'd no friend receive you ?

Lucy. Alas, how few are friends to the unfortunate ! Besides, I knew, Sir, such a step wou'd be consider'd by my father as an appeal from his justice. I therefore retir'd to a remote corner of the town, trusting, as my only advocate, to the tender calls of nature, in his cool reflecting hours.

Sir Geo. How came you to know this woman ?

Lucy. Accident plac'd me in a house, the mistress of which professed the same principles with my infamous conductress. There, as enthusiasm is the child of melancholy, I caught the infection. A constant attendance on their assemblies procured me the acquaintance of this woman, whose extraordinary zeal and devotion first drew my attention and confidence. I trusted her with my story, and in return, receiv'd the warmest invitation to take the protection of her house. This I unfortunately accepted.

Sir Geo. Unfortunately, indeed !

Lucy. By the decency of appearances, I was some time imposed upon ; but an accident which, you will excuse my repeating, revealed all the horror of my situation. I will not trouble you with a recital of all

the arts us'd to seduce me : happily they hitherto have fail'd. But this morning I was acquainted with my destiny ; and no other election left me, but immediate compliance or a jail. In this desperate condition, you cannot wonder, Sir, at my choosing rather to rely on the generosity of a gentleman, than the humanity of a creature insensible to pity, and void of every virtue.

Sir Geo. The event shall justify your choice. You have my faith and honour for your security. For tho' I can't boast of my own goodness, yet I have an honest feeling for afflicted virtue ; and, however unfashionable, a spirit that dares afford it protection. Give me your hand. As soon as I have dispatch'd some pressing business here, I will lodge you in an asylum, sacred to the distresses of your sex ; where indigent beauty is guarded from temptations, and deluded innocence rescued from infamy.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter SHIRT.

Zooks, I have toil'd like a horse ; quite tir'd by Jupiter. And what shall I get for my pains ? The old fellow here talks of making me easy for life. Easy ! and what does he mean by easy ? He'll make me an exciseman, I suppose, and so with an inkhorn at my button-hole, and a taper switch in my hand, I shall run about gauging of beer barrels. No, that will never do. This lad here is no fool. Foppish, indeed. He does not want parts, no, nor principles neither. I overheard his scene with the girl, I think

I may trust him. I have a great mind to venture it. It is a shame to have him dup'd by this old don. It must not be. I'll in and unfold—Ha !—Egad I have a thought too, which, if my heir apparent can execute, I shall still lie conceal'd, and perhaps be rewarded on both sides.

I have it,—'tis engender'd, piping hot.

And now, Sir Knight, I'll match you with a plot.

[Exit.]

Enter SIR WILLIAM and RICHARD WEALTHY.

R. Weal. Well, I suppose, by this time you are satisfied what a scoundrel you have brought into the world, and are ready to finish your foolery.

Sir Wil. Got to the catastrophe, good brother.

R. Weal. Let us have it over then.

Sir Wil. I have already alarmed all his tradesmen. I suppose we shall soon have him here, with a legion of bailiffs and constables.—Oh, have you my will about you ?

R. Weal. Yes, yes.

Sir Wil. It is almost time to produce it, or read him the clause that relates to his rejecting your daughter. That will do his business. But they come. I must return to my character.

Enter SHIFT.

Shift. Sir, Sir, we are all in the wrong box ; our scheme is blown up ; your son has detected Loader and Tally, and is playing the very devil within.

Sir Wil. Oh, the bunglers !

Shift. Now for it, youngster.

Enter SIR GEORGE, *driving in* LOADER *and another.*

Sir Geo. Rascals, robbers, that, like the locust, mark the road you have taken by the ruin and desolation you leave behind you.

Load. Sir George!

Sir Geo. And can youth, however cautious, be guarded against such deep-laid, complicated villainy? Where are the rest of your diabolical crew? your auctioneer, usurer, and——O, Sir, are you here? I am glad you have not escaped us, however.

Sir Wil. What de devil is de matter?

Sir Geo. Your birth, which I believe an imposition, preserves you, however, from the discipline those rogues have receiv'd. A baron—a nobleman—a sharper! O shame! It is enough to banish all confidence from the world. On whose faith can we rely, when those, whose honour is held as sacred as an oath, unmindful of their dignity, descend to rival pick-pockets in their infamous arts. What are these? (*pulls out dice,*) pretty implements! The fruits of your leisure hours! they are dexterously done. You have a fine mechanical turn.—Dick secure the door.

Mrs. COLE, speaking as entering.

Mrs. Cole. Here I am at last. Well, and how is your honour, and the little gentlewoman?—Bless me! what is the matter here?

Sir Geo. I am, Madam; treating your friends with

a cold collation, and you are opportunely come for your share. The little gentlewoman is safe, and in much better hands than you designed her. Abominable hypocrite! who, tottering under the load of irreverent age and infamous diseases, inflexibly proceed in the practice of every vice, impiously prostituting the most sacred institutions to the most infernal purposes.

Mrs. Cole. I hope your Honour——

Sir Geo. Take her away. As you have been singular in your penitence, you ought to be distinguish'd in your penance; which I promise you, shall be most publicly and plentifully bestow'd.

[*Exit Mrs. Cole.*]

Enter DICK.

Dick. The constables, Sir. [*Enter Constables.*]

Sir Geo. Let them come in, that I may consign these Gentlemen to their care. [*To Sir Wil.*] Your letters of nobility you will produce in a court of justice. Tho', if I read you right, you are one of those indigent, itinerent nobles of your own creation, which our reputation for hospitality draws hither in shoals, to the shame of our understanding, the impairing of our fortunes, and when you are trusted, the betraying of our designs. Officers, do your duty.

Sir Wil. Why, don't you know me?

Sir Geo. Just as I guess'd. An imposter. He has recover'd the free use of his tongue already.

Sir Wil. Nay, but George.

Sir Geo. Insolent familiarity! away with him.

Sir Wil. Hold, hold a moment. Brother Richard, set this matter to rights.

R. Weal. Don't you know him?

Sir Geo. Know him! the very question is an affront.

R. Weal. Nay, I don't wonder at it. 'Tis your father, you fool.

Sir Geo. My father? Impossible!

Sir Wil. That may be, but 'tis true.

Sir Geo. My father alive! Thus let me greet the blessing.

Sir Wil. Alive! Ay, and I believe I shan't be in a hurry to die again.

Sir Geo. But, dear Sir, the report of your death — and this disguise — to what —

Sir Wil. Don't ask any questions. Your uncle will tell you all. For my part, I am sick of the scheme.

R. Weal. I told you what would become of your politics.

Sir Wil. You did so, but if it had not been for those clumsy scoundrels, the plot was as good a plot — O George, such discoveries I have to make. Within I'll unravel the whole.

Sir Geo. Perhaps, Sir, I may match 'em.

Shift. Sir. [Pulls him by the sleeve.]

Sir Geo. Never fear. It is impossible, gentlemen, to determine your fate, till this matter is more fully explain'd; till when keep 'em safe in custody. — Do you know them, Sir?

Sir Wil. Yes, but that's more than they did me

I can cancel your debts there, and, I believe, prevail on those gentlemen to refund too——But you have been a sad profligate young dog, George.

Sir Geo. I can't boast of my goodness, Sir, but I think I could produce you a proof that I am not so totally destitute of——

Sir Wil. Ay! why then prithee do.

Sir Geo. I have, Sir, this day, resisted a temptation, that greater pretenders to morality might have yielded to. But I will trust myself no longer, and must crave your interposition and protection.

Sir Wil. To what?

Sir Geo. I will attend you with the explanation in an instant. [Exit.]

Sir Wil. Prithee, Shift, what does he mean?

Shift. I believe I can guess.

Sir Wil. Let us have it.

Shift. I suppose the affair I overheard just now; a prodigious fine, elegant girl, faith, that, discarded by her family, for refusing to marry her grandfather, fell into the hands of the venerable lady you saw; who being the kind caterer for your son's amusements, brought her hither for a purpose obvious enough. But the young gentleman, touched with her story, truth, and tears, was converted from the spoiler of her honour to the protector of her innocence.

Sir Wil. Lookee there, brother, did not I tell you that George was not so bad at the bottom!

R. Weal. This does indeed atone for half the——
But they are here.

Enter Sir GEORGE and LUCY.

Sir Geo. Fear nothing, Madam, you may safely rely on the——

Lucy. My father!

R. Weal. Lucy!

Lucy. O, Sir, can you forgive your poor distressed, unhappy girl? You scarce can guess how hardly I've been us'd since my banishment from your parental roof. Want, pining want, anguish, and shame, have been my constant partners.

Sir Wil. Brother!

Sir Geo. Sir!

Lucy. Father!

R. Weal. Rise, child, 'tis I must ask thee forgiveness. Canst thou forget the woes I've made thee suffer? Come to my arms once more, thou darling of my age.—What mischief had my rashness nearly completed. Nephew, I scarce can thank you as I ought, but—

Sir Geo. I am richly paid, in being the happy instrument—Yet, might I urge a wish——

R. Weal. Name it.

Sir Geo. That you would forgive my follies of to-day; and, as I have been providentially the occasional guardian of your daughter's honour, that you would bestow on me that right for life.

R. Weal. That must depend on Lucy; her will, not mine, shall now direct her choice—What says your father?

Sir Wil. Me! Oh, I'll show you in an instant.

Give me your hands. There children now you are joined ; and the devil take him that wishes to part you.

Sir Geo. I thank you for us both.

R. Weal. Happiness attend you.

Sir Wil. Now, brother, I hope you will allow me to be a good plotter. All this was brought to bear by my means.

Shift. With my assistance, I hope, you'll own, Sir.

Sir Wil. That's true, honest Shift, and thou shalt be richly rewarded ; nay, George shall be your friend too. This Shift is an ingenious fellow, let me tell you, son.

Sir Geo. I am no stranger to his abilities, Sir. But if you please, we will retire. The various struggles of this fair sufferer require the soothing softness of a sister's love. And now, Sir, I hope your fears for me are over ; for had I not this motive to restrain my follies, yet I now know the town too well to be ever its bubble, and will take care to preserve, at least,

Some more estate, and principles, and wit,
Than brokers, bawds, and gamesters shall think fit.

SHIFT, addressing himself to Sir GEORGE.

And what becomes of your poor servant Shift ?
Your father talks of lending me a lift—
A great man's promise, when his turn is serv'd !
Capons, on promises, wou'd soon be starv'd !

No, on myself alone I'll now rely :

'Gad I've a thriving traffic in my eye—

Near the mad mansions of Moorfields I'll bawl ;

Friends, fathers, mothers, sisters, sons, and all,

Shut up your shops, and listen to my call.

With labour, toil, all second means dispense,

And live a rent-charge upon Providence.

Prick up your ears ; a story now I'll tell,

Which once a widow and her child befel ;

I knew the mother and her daughter well.

Poor, it is true, they were ; but never wanted,

For whatsoe'er they ask'd, was always granted :

One fatal day the matron's truth was try'd,

She wanted meat and drink, and fairly cry'd.

[*Child.*] Mother, you cry ! [*Moth.*] Oh, child, I've
got no bread.

[*Child.*] What matters that ? Why Providence an't
dead !

With reason good, this truth the child might say,

For there came in at noon, that very day,

Bread, greens, potatoes, and a leg of mutton,

A better sure a table ne'er was put on :

Ay, that might be, ye cry, with those poor souls ;

But we ne'er had a rasher for the coals.

And d'ye deserve it ? How d'ye spend your days ?

In pastimes, prodigality, and plays !

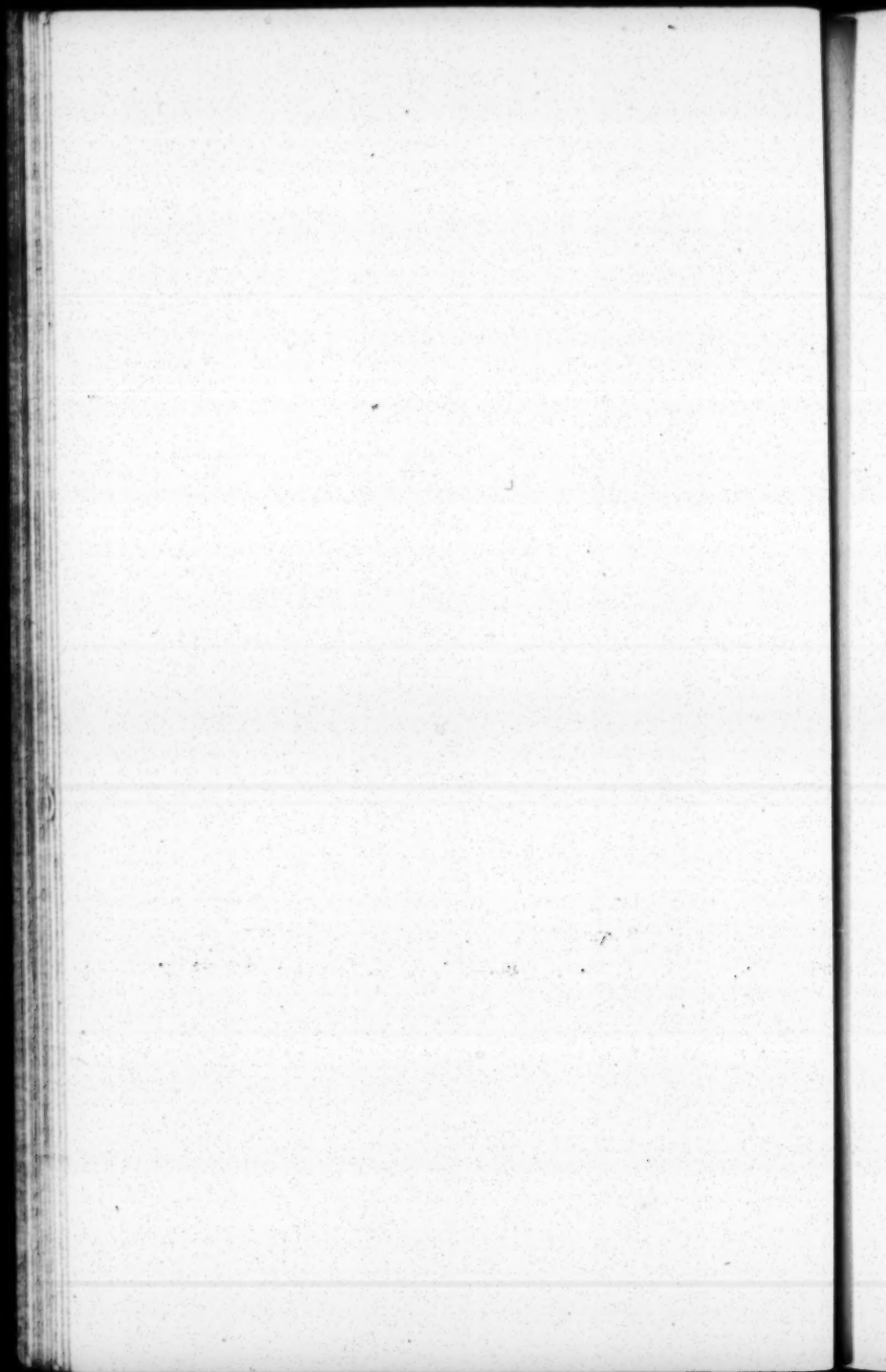
Let's go see Foote ! ah, Foote's a precious limb !

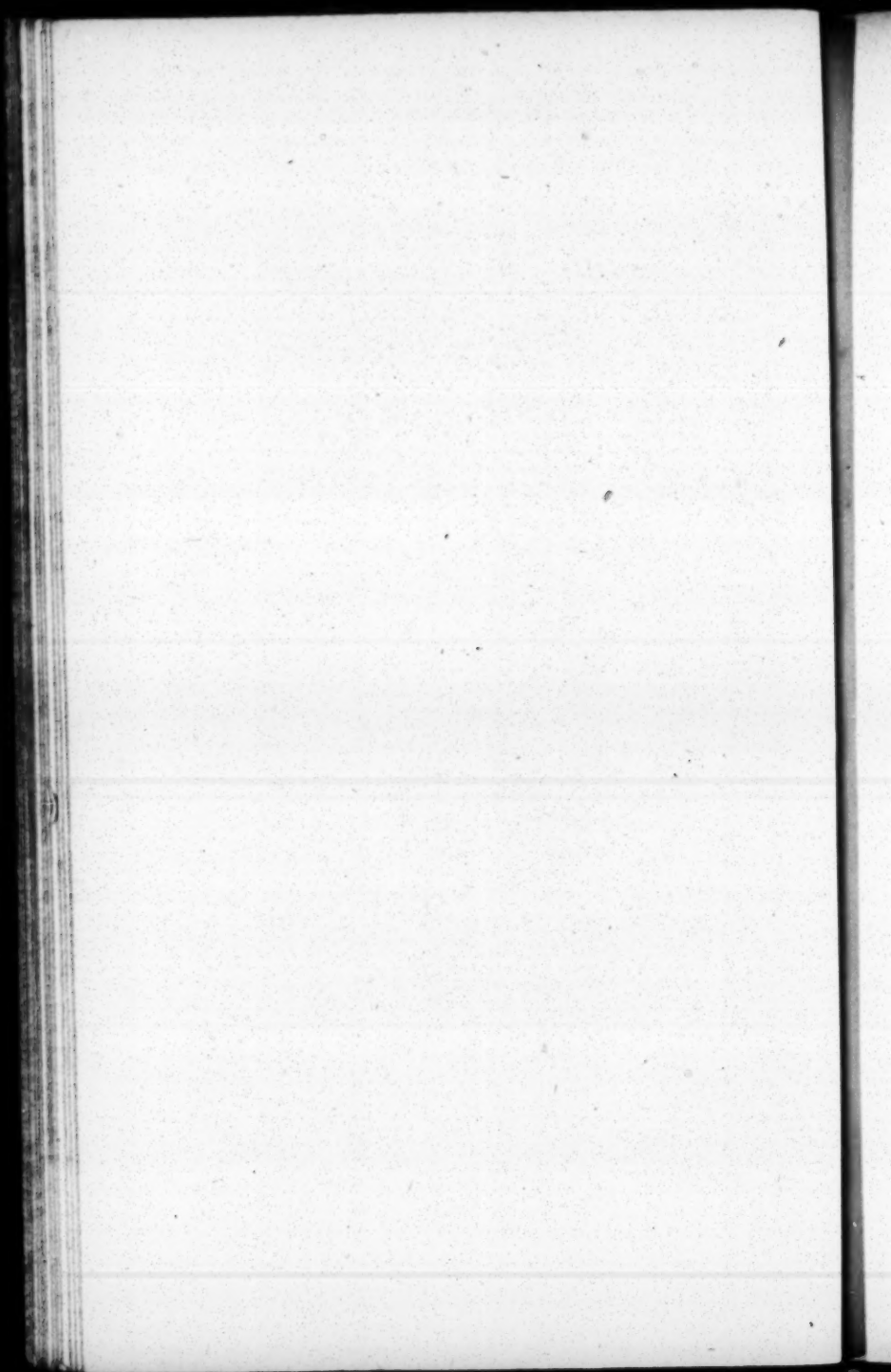
Old Nick will soon a foot-ball make of him !

For foremost rows in side-boxes you shove,

Think you to meet with side-boxes above ?

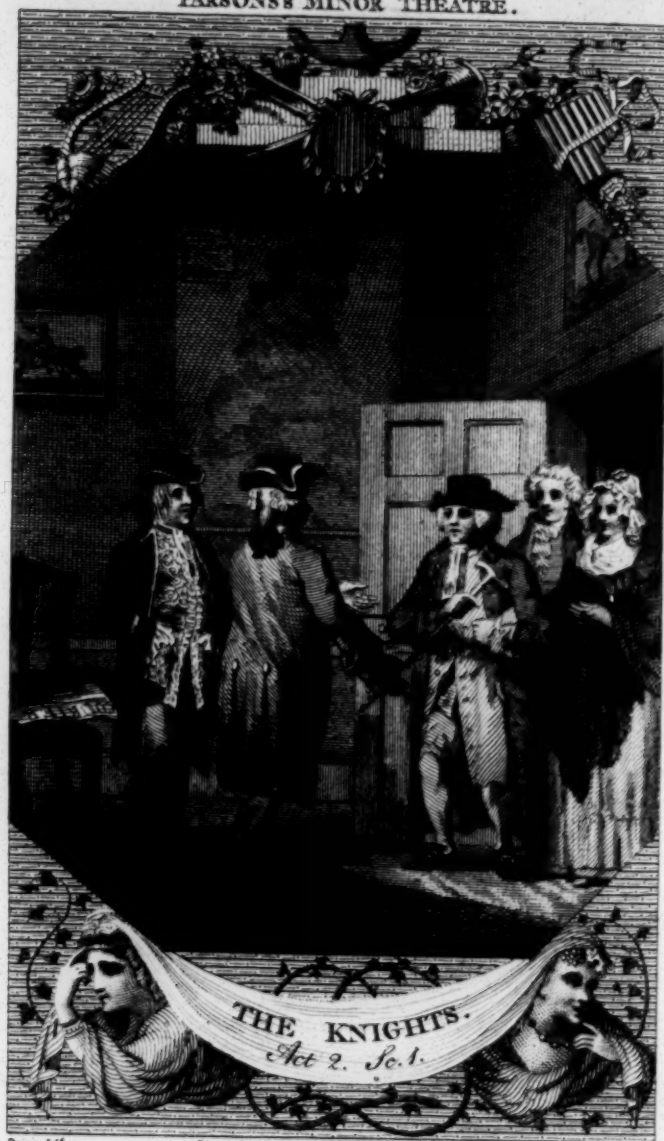
Where giggling girls and powder'd fops may sit, }
No, you will all be cramm'd into the pit, }
And croud the house for Satan's benefit. }
Oh! what you snivel? well, do so no more, }
Drop, to atone, your money at the door, }
And, if I please,—I'll give it to the poor. }







PARSONS'S MINOR THEATRE.



Dayes del.

Printed for J. Parsons, at, BARNUM'S NEW, Dec. 1793.

Scopus, sc.

THE KNIGHTS.

A F A R C E,

IN TWO ACTS.

WRITTEN BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,
FOR J. PARSONS, N^o 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1793.

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The Knights.

ALTHOUGH this diverting farce has not been performed for a number of years; yet, coming from the pen of so celebrated a writer as the late Samuel Foote, we presume the patrons of this collection will honour it with a welcome, and perhaps join with us in the hope of its revival on the stage.

The character of *TIM* is well suited to the talents of that admirable comedian the Younger Bannister: as for the Elder, it was well known that when Foote expired, he left but one behind him, and that one Charles Bannister; who could personify, with any degree of success, those characters, which owed their existence to the creative; and their effect to the acting powers of their inimitable author.

The *KNIGHTS* made their first public appearance, so long back as the year 1747, at the Haymarket Little Theatre.— Their reception was a cordial one, and such as their originality, and strength of character, in perfect harmony with nature, so well intitled them to expect from a British audience.

It has been said, that Mr. Murphy had an eye upon the news-hunter of Mr. Foote, in his *Knights*, when he drew his own in the *Upholsterer*; however that may be, it is very evident that the difference between the two politicians is very material.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Hartop,	-	MR. FOOTE
Sir Gregory Gazette,	-	MR. YATES
Jenkins,	-	MR. BLAKES
Tim,	-	MR. COSTOLLO
Robin,	-	MR. CLOUGH.

Women.

Jenny,	-	MISS MINORS
Miss Penelope Trifle,	-	MRS. CROSS
Miss Sukey Trifle,	-	MISS MILLS.



P R O L O G U E.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. FOOTE.

H A P P Y my muse, had she first turn'd her art,
 From honour's dangerous path, to touch the heart.
 They who, in all the bluster of blank verse,
 The mournful tales of love and war rehearse,
 Are sure the critics censure to escape ;
 You hiss not heroes now, you only—gape :
 Nor (strangers quite to heroes, kings, and queens,)
 Dare you intrude your judgment on their scenes.
 A different lot the comic muse attends,
 She is oblig'd to treat you with your friends :
 Must search the court, the forum, and the city,
 Mark out the dull, the gallant, and the witty ;
 Youth's wild profusion, th' avarice of age ;
 Nay, bring the Pit itself, upon the stage.
 First to the bar she turns her various face :
 Hem, hem ! My lord, I'm counsel in this case ;
 And if so be your lordship should think fit,
 Why to be sure, my client must submit :
 For why, because——Then off she trips again,
 And to the sons of commerce shifts her scene :
 There, whilst the griping sire, with moping care,
 Defrauds the world himself, t'enrich his heir ;
 The pious boy, his father's toil rewarding,
 For thousand throws a main at Covent-Garden.

These are the portraits we're oblig'd to show :
You are all judges if they're like or no :
Here should we fail, some other shape we'll try,
And grace our future scenes with novelty.
I have a plan to treat you with Burletta,
That cannot miss your taste, *Mia spiletta*.
But should the following piece your mirth excite,
From Nature's volume we'll persist to write.
Your partial favour bade us first proceed;
Then spare th' offender, since you urg'd the deed.



THE KNIGHTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room.*

HARTOP and JENKINS *discovered.*

Jenkins.

I SHOULD not choose to marry into such a family.

Har. Choice, dear Dick, is very little concern'd in the matter; and to convince you that love is not the minister of my counsels, know, that I never saw but once the object of my present purpose; and that too at a time, and in a circumstance, not very likely to stamp a favourable impression. What think you of a raw boarding-school girl at Lincoln Minster, with a mind unpolish'd, a figure uninform'd, and a set of features tainted with the colours of her unwholesome food.

Jenk. No very engaging object indeed, Hartop.

Har. Your thoughts now were mine then; but some connections I have since had with her father,

have given birth to my present design upon her. You are no stranger to the situation of my circumstances : my neighbourhood to Sir Penurious Trifle, was a sufficient motive for his advancing what money I wanted by way of mortgage ; the hard terms he imposed upon me, and the little regard I have paid to œconomy, has made it necessary for me to attempt, by some scheme, the re-establishment of my fortune. This young lady's simplicity, not to call it ignorance, presented her at once as a proper subject for my purpose.

Jenk. Success to you, Jack, with all my soul ! a fellow of your spirit and vivacity, mankind ought to support for the sake of themselves. ‘ For what-
‘ ever Seneca and the other moral writers may have
‘ suggested in contempt of riches, it is plain their
‘ maxims were not calculated for the world as it
‘ now stands. In days of yore, indeed, when vir-
‘ tue was called *wisdom*, and vice *folly*, such princi-
‘ ples might have been encourag’d : but as the pre-
‘ sent subjects of our enquiry are, not what a man
‘ is, but what he has ; as to be rich, is to be wise
‘ and virtuous ; and to be poor, ignorant and vici-
‘ ous ; I heartily applaud your plan.

‘ *Har.* Your observation is but too just. And is
‘ it not, Dick, a little unaccountable, that we, who
‘ condescend so servilely to copy the follies and fop-
‘ peries of our polite neighbours, should be so to-
‘ tally averse to an imitation of their virtues ? In
‘ France, has he wealth ? is an interrogation never
‘ put, till they are disappointed in their enquiries

‘ after the birth and wisdom of a fashionable fellow : but here, how much a-year?—two thousand —The devil ! In what county ? Berksſhire. Indeed ! God bless us ! a happy dog !——How the deuce came I to be interested in a man’s fortune, unless I am his steward or his taylor ? Indeed, knowledge and genius are worth examining into ; by those my understanding may be improv’d, or my imagination gratify’d : but why such a man being able to eat ortolans, and drink French wine, is to recommend him to my esteem, is what I can’t readily conceive.’

Jenk. ‘ This complaint may with justice be made of all imitations : the ridiculous side is ever the object imitated.’ But, ‘ a truce to moralizing, and to our business.’ Prithee, in the first place, how can you gain admittance to your mistress ? and, in the second, is the girl independent of her father ? His consent, I suppose, you have no thought of obtaining.

Har. Some farther proposals concerning my estate ; such as an increase of the mortgage, or an absolute sale, is a sufficient pretence for a visit ; and as to the cash ; twenty to my knowledge ; independent too, you rogue ! and, besides, an only child, you know : and then, when things are done, they can’t be undone—and ’tis well, ’tis no worse—and a hundred such pretty proverbs, will, ’tis great odds, reconcile the old fellow at last. Besides, my papa *in posse*, has a foible, which, if I condescend to humour, I have his soul, my dear.

Jenk. Prithee, now you are in spirits, give me a portrait of Sir Penurious ; though he is my neighbour, yet he is so domestic an animal, that I know no more of him than the common country-conversation, that he is a thrifty, wary man.

Har. The very abstract of penury ! Sir John Cutler, with his transmigrated stockings, was but a type of him. For instance, the barber has the growth of his and his daughter's head once a-year, for shaving the knight once a fortnight ; his shoes are made with the leather of a coach of his grandfather's, built in the year One ; his male-servant is footman, groom, carter, coachman, and taylor ; his maid employs her leisure hours in plain work for the neighbours, which Sir Penurious takes care, as her labour is for his emolument, shall be as many as possible, by joining with his daughter in scouring the rooms, making the beds, &c.—Thus much for his moral character. Then as to his intellectual, he is a mere *charte blanche* ; the last man he is with must afford him matter for the next he goes to : but a story is his idol ; throw him in that, and he swallows it ; no matter what, raw or roasted, savoury or insipid, down it goes, and up again to the first person he meets. It is upon this basis I found my favour with the knight, having acquir'd patience enough to hear his stories, and equipp'd myself with a quantity sufficient to furnish him. 'His manner is indeed peculiar, and for once or twice entertaining enough. I'll give you a specimen—' Is not that an equipage ?

Jenk. Hey ! yes faith ; and the owner an acquaint-

ance of mine: Sir Gregory Gazette, by Jupiter! and his son Tim with him. Now I can match your Knight. He must come this way to the parlour. We'll have a scene; but take your cue; he is a country politician.

Sir GREGORY entering and WAITER.

Sir Greg. What, neither the Gloucester Journal, nor the Worcester Courant, nor the Northampton Mercury, nor the Chester? Mr. Jenkins, I am your humble servant: A strange town this, Mr. Jenkins, no news stirring, no papers taken in! Is that gentleman a stranger, Mr. Jenkins? Pray, Sir, not to be too bold, you don't come from London?

Har. But last night.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, that's wonderful! Mr. Jenkins, introduce me.

Jenk. Mr. Hartop, Sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Greg. Sir, I am proud to—Well, Sir, and what news? You come from—Pray, Sir, are you a parliament-man?

Har. Not I, indeed, Sir.

Sir Greg. Good lack! may be, belong to the law?

Har. Nor that.

Sir Greg. Oh, then in some of the offices; the treasury, or the exchequer?

Har. Neither, Sir.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, that's wonderful! Well, but Mr.—Pray what name did Mr Jenkins, Ha,—ha—

Har. Hartop.

Sir Greg. Ay, true!—What, not of the Hartops of Boston?

Har. No.

Sir Greg. May be not. There is, Mr. Hartop, one thing that I envy you Londoners in much—quires of newspapers! Now I reckon you read a matter of eight sheets every day.

Har. Not one.

Sir Greg. Wonderful!—Then, may be, you are about court; and so being at the fountain-head, know what is in the papers before they are printed.

Har. I never trouble my head about them.—An old fool! [*Apart.*

Sir Greg. Good Lord! Your friend, Mr. Jenkins, is very close.

Jenk. Why, Sir Gregory, Mr. Hartop is much in the secrets above; and it becomes a man so trusted to be wary, you know.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so. Wonderful! Ay, ay, a great man, no doubt.

Jenk. But I'll give him a better insight into your character, and that will induce him to throw off his reserve.

Sir Greg. May be so: do, do; ay, ay.

Jenk. Prithee, Jack, don't be so crusty: indulge the knight's humour a little! besides, if I guess right, it may be necessary for the conduct of your design to contract a pretty strict intimacy there.

Har. Well, do as you will.

Jenk. Sir Gregory, Mr. Hartop's ignorance of your character made him a little shy in his replies:

but you will now find him more communicative ; and, in your ear—he is a treasure ; he is in all the mysteries of government ! at the bottom of every thing.

Sir Greg. Wonderful ! a treasure ! ay, may be so.

Jenk. And, that you may have him to yourself, I'll go in search of your son.

Sir Greg. Do so, do so ; Tim is without ; just come from his uncle Treggle's, at Menegizy, in Cornwall. Tim is an honest lad—do so, do so—(*Exit Jenk.*)—Well, Mr. Hartop, and so we have a peace, lack-a-day ; long-look'd-for come at last. But pray, Mr. Hartop, how many newspapers may you have printed in a week ?

Har. About an hundred and fifty, Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now ! and all full, I reckon ; full as an egg ; nothing but news ! Well, well, I shall go to London one of these days. A hundred and fifty ! Wonderful ! And pray, now, which do you reckon the best ?

Har. Oh, Sir Gregory, they are various in their excellencies as their uses. If you are inclin'd to blacken, by a couple of lines, the reputation of a neighbour, ' whose character neither your nor his ' whole life can possibly restore,' you may do it for two shillings in one paper : if you are displaced or disappointed of a place, a triplet against the ministry will be always well received at the head of another ; ' and then, as a paper of morning-amusement, you ' have the Fool.

Sir Greg. The Fool! good lack! and pray who
' and what may that same fool be?

Har. Why, Sir Gregory, the author has artfully
' assumed that habit, like the royal jesters of old, to
' level his satire with more security to himself, and
' severity to others.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so! 'The Fool!
' ha, ha, ha! Well enough; a queer dog, and no
' fool, I warrant you. Killigrew; ah, I have heard
' my grandfather talk much of that same Killigrew,
' and no fool.' But what's all this to news, Mr.
Hartop? Who gives us the best account of the king
of Spain, and the queen of Hungary, and those great
folks? Come now, you could give us a little news if
you would; come now—snug!—nobody by. Good
now, do; come, ever so little.

Har. Why, as you so largely contribute to the sup-
port of the government, it is but fair you should
know what they are about. We are at present in a
treaty with the Pope.

Sir Greg. With the Pope? Wonderful! Good
now, good now! How, how?

Har. We are to yield him up a large track of the
Terra-incognita, together with both the Needles,
Scilly-rocks, and the Lizard-point, on condition
that the Pretender has the government of Laputa,
and the bishop of Greenland succeeds to St. Peter's
chair: he being, you know, a Protestant, when pos-
sessed of the pontificals, issues out a bull, commanding
all Catholics to be of his religion: they deeming the

Pope infallible, follow his directions; and then, Sir Gregory, we are all of one mind.

Sir Greg. Good lack, good lack! Rare news, rare news, rare news! Ten millions of thanks, Mr. Hartop. But might not I just hint this to Mr. Soakum, our vicar? 'twould rejoice his heart.

Har. O fie, by no means.

Sir Greg. Only a line—a little hint—Do now?

Har. Well, Sir, it is difficult for me to refuse you any thing.

Sir Greg. Ten thousand thanks. Good now! the Pope—Wonderful! I'll minute it down—Both the Needles?

Har. Ay, both.

Sir Greg. Good now; I'll minute it—the Lizard-point—both the Needles—Scilly-rocks—bishop of Greenland—St. Peter's chair—Why then, when this is finished, we may chance to attack the great Turk, and have holy wars again, Mr. Hartop.

Har. That's part of the scheme.

Sir Greg. Ah, good now! You see I have a head! Politics have been my study many a day. Ah, if I had been in London to improve by the newspapers! They tell me Dr. Drybones is to succeed to the bishopric of Wisper.

Har. No; Doctor——

Sir Greg. Indeed! I was told by my landlord at Ross, that it was between him and the dean of——

Har. To my knowledge.

Sir Greg. Nay, you know best, to be sure. If it should——Hush! here's Mr. Jenkins and son Tim——

mum!—Mr. Jenkins does not know any thing about the treaty with the Pope?

Har. Not a word.

Sir Greg. Mum!

Enter TIM and Mr. JENKINS.

Jenk. Master Timothy is almost grown out of knowledge, Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! ay, ay; Ill weeds grow a-pace. Son Tim, Mr. Hartop; a great man, child! Mr. Hartop, son Tim.

Har. Sir, I shall be always glad to know every branch that springs from so valuable a trunk as Sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Greg. May be so. Wonderful! ay, ay.

Har. Sir, I am glad to see you in Herefordshire;—Have you been long from Cornwall?

Tim. Ay, Sir; a matter of four weeks or a month, more or less.

Sir Greg. Well said, Tim. Ay, ay, ask Tim any questions, he can answer for himself. Tim, tell Mr. Hartop all the news about the elections, and the tinnors, and the tides, and the roads, and the pilchards. I want a few words with my Master Jenkins.

Har. You have been so long absent from your native country, that you have almost forgot it.

Tim. Yes sure. I ha' been at uncle Tregegle's a matter of twelve or a dozen year, more or less.

Har. Then I reckon you were quite impatient to see your papa and mama?

Tim. No sure, not I. Father sent for me to uncle.

—Sure Menegezy is a choice place! and I could a' stay'd there all my born days, more or less.

Har. Pray, Sir, what were your amusements?

Tim. Nan! what d'ye say?

Har. How did you divert yourself?

Tim. Oh, we ha' pastimes enow there:—we ha' bull-baiting, and cock-fighting, and fishing, and hunting, and hurling, and wrestling.

Har. The two last are sports for which that country is very remarkable;—in those, I presume, you are very expert.

Tim. Nan! What?

Har. I say you are a good wrestler.

Tim. Oh, yes sure, I can wrestle well enow:—but we don't wrestle after your fashion; we ha' no tripping, fath and sole! we go all upon close hugs, or the flying mare. Will you try a fall, Master?—I won't hurt you, fath and sole.

Har. We had as good not venture though. But have you left in Cornwall nothing that you regret the loss of more than hurling and wrestling?

Tim. Nan! What?

Har. No favourite she?

Tim. Arra, I coupled Favourite and Jowler together, and sure they tugg'd it all the way up. Part with Favourite! no, I thank you for nothing. You must know I nurs'd Favourite myself: uncle's huptsman was going to Mill-pond to drown all Music's puppies, so I saved she. But fath, I'll tell you a comical story; at Lanston, they both broke loose, and eat a whole loin-a'-veal, and a leg of beef:

‘Crist!’ how landlord swear’d! fath the poor fellow was almost maz’d; it made me die wi’ laughing. But how came you to know about our Favourite?

Har. A circumstance so material to his son, could not escape the knowledge of Sir Gregory Gazette’s friends. But here you mistook me a little ‘Squire Tim; I meant whether your affections were not settled upon some pretty girl—Has not some Cornish lass caught your heart?

Tim. Hush! cod, the old man will hear; jog a tiny bit this way—won’t a’ tell father?

Har. Upon my honour!

Tim. Why then, I’ll tell you the whole story more or less. Do you know Mally Pengrouse?

Har. I am not so happy.

Tim. She’s uncle’s milk-maid;—she’s as handsome, Lord! her face all red and white, like the inside of a shoulder of mutton; so I made love to our Mally: and just, fath, as I had got her good-will to run away to Exeter and be married, uncle found it out, and sent word to father, and father sent for me home;—but I don’t love her a bit the worse for that. But, i’cod, if you tell father, he’ll knock my brains out; for he says, I’ll disparage the family, and mother’s as mad as a March hare about it;—so father and mother ha’ brought me to be married to some young body in these parts.

Har. What, is my lady here?

Tim. No, sure; dame Winnifred, as father calls her, could not come along.

Har. I am sorry for that; I have the honour to be a distant relation of her ladyship’s.

Tim. Like enough, fath!—she's a-kin to half the world I think. But don't you say a word to father about Mally Pengrouse. Hush!

Jenk. Mr. Hartop, Sir Gregory will be amongst us some time—he is going with his son to Sir Penu-rious Trifle's ;—there is a kind of a treaty of marriage on foot between Miss Sukey Trifle and Mr. Timothy.

Har. The devil! (*apart.*) I shall be glad of every circumstance that can make me better acquainted with Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now ; may be so, may be so!

Tim. Father, sure the gentleman says as how mother and he are a-kin.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! Lack-a-day, lack-a-day! how, how? I am proud to—but how, Mr. Hartop, how?

Har. Why, Sir, a cousin-german of my aunt's first husband, intermarry'd with a distant relation of a collateral branch by the mother's side, the Apprices of Lantrindon; and we have ever since quartered in a 'scutcheon of pretence the three goat's tails rampant, divided by a cheveron, field-argent; with a leek pendant in the dexter-point, to distinguish the second house.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! wonderful! nearly, nearly related! Good now, good now, if dame Winnifred was here, she'd make 'em all out with a wet finger;—but they are above me. Prithee, Tim, good now, see after the horses—and, d'ye hear, try if you can get any newspapers.

Tim. Yes, father—But cousin what-d'ye-call-um, not a word about Mally Pengrouse.

Har. Mum!

[*Exit Tim.*]

Sir Greg. Good now, that boy will make some mistake about the horses now! I'll go myself. Good now, no farther, cousin; if you please, no ceremony—A hundred and fifty newspapers a week! 'the Fool!' ha, ha, ha, wonderful! an odd dog.

[*Exit Sir Greg.*]

Jenk. So, Jack, here's a fresh spoke in your wheel.

Har. This is a cursed cross incident.

Jenk. Well, but something must be done to frustrate the scheme of your new cousin's. Can you think of nothing?

Har. I have been hammering: pray, are the two knights intimate? are they well acquainted with each other's person?

Jenk. Faith, I can't tell; but we may soon know.

Har. Cou'd you recommend me a good spirited girl, who has humour and compliance to follow a few directions, and understanding enough to barter a little inclination for 3000*l.* a-year and a fool?

Jenk. In part I guess your design; the man's daughter of the house is a good lively lass, has a fortune to make, and no reputation to lose: I'll call her—Jenny!—but the enemy's at hand—I'll withdraw and prepare Jenny. When the worshipful family are retired, I'll introduce the wench.

[*Exit Jenk.*]

Enter Sir GREGORY and TIM.

Sir Greg. Pray, now, cousin, are you in friendship with Sir Penurious Trifle?

Har. I have the honour, Sir, of that gentleman's acquaintance.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so!—but, lack-a-day, cousin, is he such a miser as folks say? Good now, they tell me we shall hardly have necessaries for ourselves and horses at Gripe-hall;—but as you are a relation, you should, good now, know the affairs of the family. Here's Sir Penurious's letter; here, cousin.

Har. “Your overture I receive with pleasure, “and should be glad to meet you in Shropshire.”—I fancy, from a thorough knowledge of Sir Penurious's disposition, and by what I can collect from the contents of that letter, he would be much better pleased to meet you here than at his own house.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, may be so!—a strange man! wonderful! But, good now, cousin, what must we do?

Har. I this morning paid Sir Penurious a visit; and if you'll honour me with your commands, I'll—

Sir Greg. Wonderful! to-day!—good now, that's lucky! cousin, you are very kind. Good now, I'll send a letter, Tim, by cousin Hartop.

Har. A letter from so old an acquaintance, and upon so happy an occasion, will secure me a favourable reception.

Sir Greg. Good lack, good lack, an old acquaintance, indeed, cousin Hartop! we were at Hereford 'size together—let's see, wonderful, how long ago?—'twas while I was courting Dame Winny, the year before I married—Good now, how long? let's see—that year the hackney stable was built, and Peter Ugly, the blind pad, fell into a saw-pit.

Tim. Mother says, father and she was marry'd the first of April in the year ten; and I knows 'tis thereabout, for I am two and thirty; and brother Jeremy, and Roger, and Gregory, and sister Nelly, were born'd before I.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! how time wears away! wonderful! thirty-eight years ago, Tim! I could not have thought it. But come in, let's set about the letter. ' But, pray, cousin, what diversions, good now, are going forward in London?

' *Har.* Oh, Sir, we are in no distress for amusement; we have plays, balls, puppet-shews, masquerades, bull-baitings, boxings, burlettas, routs, drums, and a thousand others. But I am in haste ' for your epistle, Sir Gregory.'

Sir Greg. Cousin, your servant.

[Exit Sir Gregory and Tim.

Har. I am your most obedient—Thus far our scheme succeeds; and if Jenkins's girl can assume the awkward pertness of the daughter, with as much success as I can imitate the spirited folly of Sir Penurious the father, I don't despair of a happy catastrophe.

Enter JENNY.

Jenny. Sir, Mr. Jenkins—

Har. Oh, child, your instructions shall be administered within.

Jenny. Mr. Jenkins has open'd your design, and I am ready and able to execute my part.

Har. My dear, I have not the least doubt of either your inclination or ability—But, pox take this old fellow! what in the devil's name can bring him back? Scour, Jenny.

Enter Sir GREGORY.

Sir Greg. Cousin, I beg pardon; but I have a favour to beg—Good now, could not you make interest at some coffee-house in London, to buy, for a small matter, the old books of newspapers, and send them into the country to me? They would pass away the time rarely in a rainy day—

Har. Sir, I'll send you a cart-load.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! Ten thousand thanks!—You are a cousin indeed. But, pray, cousin, let us, good now, see some of the works of that same fool?

Har. I'll send them you all; but a—

Sir Greg. What, all?—Lack-a-day, that's kind, cousin!—The Terra-incognita—both the Needles—a great deal of that!—But what bishop is to be Pope?

Har. Zounds, Sir, I am in haste for your letter—When I return, ask as many questions—

‘ *Sir Greg.* Good now, good now! that’s true—
‘ I’ll in, and about it.—But, cousin, the Pope is
‘ not to have Gibraltar?

‘ *Har.* No, no; damn it, no! As none but the
‘ Fool could say it, so none but ideots would believe
‘ him.—Pray, Sir Gregory—

‘ *Sir Greg.* Well, well, cousin, lack-a-day! you
‘ are so—but pray —

‘ *Har.* Damn your praying! If you don’t finish
‘ your letter immediately, you may carry it your-
‘ self.

‘ *Sir Greg.* Well, well, cousin! Lack-a-day, you
‘ are in such a—good now, I go, I go.

‘ *Har.* But if the truth should be discover’d, I
‘ shall be inevitably disappointed.

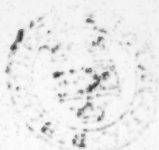
‘ *Sir Greg.* But, cousin, are Scilly rocks—

‘ *Har.* I wish they were in your guts with all my
‘ heart. I must quit the field, I find. [Exit.

‘ *Sir Greg.* Wonderful! good now, good now!
‘ a passionate man! Lack-a-day, I am glad the Pope
‘ is not to have Gibraltar though. [Exit.

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.



SCENE I.—*Sir GREGORY, and TIM reading news to him, discovered.*

Tim.

CONSTANTINOPLE, N. S. Nov. 15, the grand Seignieur—

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! good now, Tim, the politics, child: and read the stars, and the dashes, and the blanks, as I taught you, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father—We can assure our readers, that the D—dash is to go to F blank: and that a certain noble L— is to resign his p—e in the t—y, in order to make room for the two three stars.

Sir Greg. Wonderful: good now, good now! great news, Tim! Ah, I knew the two three stars would come in play one time or other. This London Evening knows more than any of them. Well, child, well.

Tim. From the D. J.

Sir Greg. Ay, that's the Dublin Journal. Go on, Tim.

Tim. Last Saturday, a gang of highwaymen broke into an empty house on Ormond quay, and stripp'd it of all the furniture.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, wonderful! To what a height these rogues are grown!

C

Tim. The way to Mr. Keith's chapel, is turn of your——

Sir Greg. Psha! skip that, Tim; I know that road as well as the doctor: 'tis in every time.

Tim. J. Ward, at the Cat and Gridiron, Petticoat-lane, makes tabby all over for people inclined to be crooked; and if he was to have the universal world for making a pair of stays, he could not put better stuff in them——

Sir Greg. Good now; where's that, Tim?

Tim. At the Cat and Gridiron, father.

Sir Greg. I'll minute that: All my lady Isard's children, good now, are inclined to be crooked.

Enter a DRAWER.

Draw. Sir, Mr. Jenkins begs to speak with you.

Sir Greg. Good now; desire him to walk in.

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. I thought it might not be improper to prepare you for a visit from Sir Penurious Trifle. I saw him and his daughter alight at the apothecary's above.

Sir Greg. What, they are come? Wonderful! Very kind, very kind, very kind, indeed, Mr. — Come, Tim, settle my cravat: good now, let's be a little decent.—Remember your best bow to your mistress, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father! but must not I kiss Miss Suck?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, ay, ay. Pray, is cousin Hartop come along?

Jenk. I have not seen him; but I fancy I had better introduce my neighbours.

Sir Greg. Good now, would you be so kind. [*Exit Jenkins.*] Stand behind me, Tim—Pull down your ruffles, child.

Tim. But, father, won't Miss Suck think me bold if I kiss her chops the first time?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, no, Tim, no. Faint heart never won fair lady. Ha, Tim, had you but seen me attack dame Winny! But times ar'n't as they were. Good now, we were another kind of folks in those days; stout hearty smacks, that wou'd ha' made your mouth water again; and the mark stood upon the pouting lip like the print upon a pound of butter. But the master-misses of the present age go, lack-a-day, as gingerly about it, as if they were afraid to fill their mouths with the paint upon their mistresses cheeks. Ah, the days I have seen!

Tim. Nay, father, I warrant, if that's all, I kiss her hearty enow, fath and sole!

Sir Greg. Hush, Tim, hush! Stand behind me, child.

Enter HARTOP as Sir PENURIOUS TRIFLE, and JENNY as Miss SUKEY, and JENKINS.

Sir Greg. Sir Penurious, I am overjoy'd!—Good now!

Har. Sir Gregory, I kiss your hand. My daughter Suck.

Sir Greg. Wonderful!—Miss, I am proud to—Son Tim—Sir Penurious—Best bow, child—Miss Suck—

Tim. An't that right father? [Kisses her.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! I am glad to see you look so well. You keep your own, Sir Penurious.

Har. Ay, ay, stout enough, Sir Gregory; stout enough, brother knight; hearty as an oak. Hey, Dick? Gad, now I talk of an oak, I'll tell you a story of an oak. It will make you die with laughing. Hey, you Dick, you have heard it; shall I tell it Sir Gregory?

Jenk. Though I have heard it so often, yet there is something so engaging in your manner of telling a story, that it always appears new.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now; I love a comical story. Pray, Sir Penurious, let's have it.—Mind, Tim; mind, child.

Tim. Yes, father; fath and sole, I love a choice story to my heart's blood!

Har. You, knight, I was at Bath last summer—a water that people drink when they are ill. You have heard of the bath, Dick! Hey, you!

Tim. Yes, fath, I know Bath; I was there in my way up.

Sir Greg. Hush, Tim; good now, hush!

Har. There's a coffee-house, you—a place where people drink coffee and tea, and read the news.

Sir Greg. Pray, Sir Penurious, how many papers may they take in?

Har. Psha! damn the news? mind the story.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! a hasty man, Tim!

Har. Pox take you both! I have lost the story—Where did I leave off?—hey—you Dick.

Tim. About coffee and tea.

Har. Right, you, right! true, true! So ecod, you knight, I us'd to breakfast at this coffee-house every morning; it cost me eightpence though, and I had always a breakfast at home—no matter for that though! there I breakfasted, you Dick, ecod, at the same table with lord Tom Truewit—You have heard of Truewit, you knight; a droll dog! You, Dick, he told us the story, and made us die with laughing. You have heard of Charles the Second, you knight; he was son of Charles the First, king here in England, that was beheaded by Oliver Cromwell: So what does Charles the Second, you knight, do? but he fights Noll at Worcester, a town you have heard of, not far off: but all would not do, you: ecod, Noll made him scamper, made him run, take to his heels, you knight. Truewit told us the story, made us die with laughing. I always breakfasted at the coffee-house; it cost me eightpence, though I had a breakfast at home—So what does Charles do, but hid himself in an oak, an oak-tree, you, in a wood call'd Boscobel, from two Italian words, Bosco Bello, a fine wood, you; and off he marches: but old Noll would not let him come home; no, says he, you don't come here. Lord Tom told us the story;—made us die with laughing; it cost me eightpence, though I had a breakfast at home. So, you knight, when Noll dy'd, Monk there, you, afterwards Albe-marle, in the north, brought him back. So, you,

the cavaliers, you have heard of them; they were friends to the Stuarts. What did they do, ecod, you Dick! but they put up Charles in a sign, the royal oak; you have seen such signs at country-alehouses: so, ecod, you, what does a Puritan do—the Puritans were friends to Noll—but he puts up the sign of an owl in the ivy-bush, and underneath he writes, “This is not the royal oak.” You have seen writings under signs, you knight. Upon this, says the royalists, Ecod, this must not be: so, you, what do they do, but, ecod, they prosecuted the poor Puritan; but they made him change his sign though. And you, Dick, how d’ye think they chang’d it?—Ecod, he puts up the royal oak, and underneath he writes, “This is not the owl in the ivy-bush.”—It made us all die with laughing. Lord Tom told the story. I always breakfasted at the coffee-house, though it cost me eightpence, and I had a breakfast at home; hey, you knight! what, Dick, hey!

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! wonderful!

Tim. A choice tale, fath!

Jenk. Oh, Sir Penurious is a most entertaining companion, that must be allow’d.

Sir Greg. Good now, ay, ay, a merry man! But, lack-a-day, would not the young lady choose a little refreshment after her ride? some tea or some——

Har. Hey, you knight! No, no; we intend to dine with thee, man. Well, you, Tim, what dost think of thy father-in-law that is to be, hey? A jolly cock, you Tim; hey, Dick. But prithee, boy what dost do with all this tawdry tinsel on: that hat and

waistcoat? Trash, knight, trash! more in thy pocket and less in thy cloaths; hey, you Dick! Ecod, you knight, I'll make you laugh: I went to London, you Dick, last year, to call in a mortgage; and what does me I, Dick, but take a trip to a coffee-house in St. Martin's Lane; in comes a French fellow forty times as fine as Tim, with his muff and parlevous, and his Francés; and his head, you knight, as white with powder, ecod, you, as a twelfth cake: and who the devil d'ye think, Dick, this might be, hey, you knight?

Sir Greg. Good now, an ambassador, to be sure.

Har. Ecod, you knight, nor better nor worser than Mynheer Vancaper, a Dutch figure-dancer at the opera-house in the Haymarket.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now!

Har. Psha! pox, prithee, Tim, nobody dresses now; all plain: look at me, knight; I am in the tip of the mode; now am I in full dress; hey Dick?

Jenk. You, Sir, don't want the aid of dress; but in Mr. Gazette, a little regard to that particular is but a necessary compliment to his mistress.

Har. Stuff, Dick, stuff! my daughter, knight, has had otherguess breeding. Hey, you, Suck, come forward. Plain as a pikestaff, knight; all as nature made her; hey, Tim; no flams. Prithee, Tim, off with thy lace, and burn it; 'twill help to buy the licence; 'she'll not like thee a bit the better for 'that;' hey, Suck! But you, knight; ecod, Dick, a toast and tankard would not be amiss after our walk; hey, you!

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! what you will, Sir Penurious.

Har. Ecod, that's hearty, you! but we won't part the young couple: hey. I'll send Suck some bread and cheese in; hey, knight! at her, Tim.—Come, Dick; come, you knight. Did I ever tell you my courtship, hey, Dick? 'twill make you laugh.

Jenk. Not as I remember.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, let's have it.

Har. You know my wife was blind, you knight.

Sir Greg. Good now, wonderful! not I.

Har. Blind as a beetle when I married her, knight; hey, Dick! she was drown'd in our orchard. Maid Bess, Knight, went to market, you, Dick; and wife rambled into the orchard, and souse dropp'd into the fish-pond. We found her out next day; but she was dead as a herring; no help for that Dick; buried her though, hey you! She was only daughter to Sir Tristram Muckworm, you: rich enough, you, hey! Ecod, you, what does she do, you, but she falls in love with young Sleek her father's chaplain, hey you! Upon that, what does me I, but slips on domine's robes, you, pass'd myself upon her for him, and we were tack'd together, you, knight, hey, ecod; though I believe she never liked me; but what signifies that, hey, Dick; she was rich, you. But come, let's leave the children together.

Sir Greg. Sir, I wait on you.

Har. Nay, pray——

Sir Greg. Good now, good now, 'tis impossible.

Har. Pox of ceremony! you, Dick, hey! Ecod, knight, I'll tell you a story. One of our ambassadors in France, you, a devilish polite fellow reckon'd, Dick; ecod, you, what does the king of France do, but, says he, I'll try the manners of this fine gentleman: so, knight, going into a coach together, the king would have my lord go first: Oh, an't please your majesty, I can't indeed; you, hey, Dick! Upon which, what does me the king, but he takes his arm thus, you, Dick; am I king of France, or you? is it my coach, or yours? and so pushes him in thus? hey, Dick!

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! he, he, he!

Har. Ecod, Dick, I believe I have made a mistake here; I should have gone in first; hey, Dick! Knight, ecod, you, beg pardon. Yes, your coach, not mine; your house, not mine; hey, knight!

Sir Greg. Wonderful! A merry man, Mr. Jenkins. *[Exit the two Knights and Jenkins.]*

Tim. Father and cousin are gone, fath and sole!

Jenny. I fancy my lover is a little puzzled how to begin.

Tim. How—fath and sole, I don't know what to say. How d'ye do, Miss Suck?

Jenny. Pretty well, thank you.

Tim. You have had a choice walk. 'Tis a rare day, fath and sole.

Jenny. Yes, the day's well enough.

Tim. Is your house a good way off here?

Jenny. Dice or your mile.

Tim. That's a good long walk, fath ! ✓

Jenny. I make nothing of it, and back again.

Tim. Like enow.

[Whistles.

Jenny.

[Sings.

Tim. You have a rare pipe of your own, Miss.

Jenny. I can sing loud enough, if I have a mind ;
but father don't love singing.

Tim. Like enow.

[Whistles.

Jenny. And I an't overfond of whistling.

Tim. Hey ! ay, like enow : and I am a bitter bad
singer.

Jenny. Hey ! ay, like enough.

Tim. Pray, Miss Suck, did ever any body make
love to you before ?

Jenny. Before when ?

Tim. Before now.

Jenny. What if I won't tell you ?

Tim. Why then you must let it alone, fath and
sole.

Jenny. Like enough.

Tim. Pray, Miss Suck, did your father tell you
any thing ?

Jenny. About what ?

Tim. About I.

Jenny. What should a tell ?

Tim. Tell ! why, as how I and father was come
a-wooing.

Jenny. Who ?

Tim. Why, you. Could you like me for a sweet.
heart, Miss Suck ?

Jenny. I don't know.

Tim. Mayhap somebody may ha' got your goodwill already?

Jenny. And what then?

Tim. Then! hey, I don't know. But if you could fancy me——

Jenny. For what?

Tim. For your true lover.

Jenny. Well, what then?

Tim. Then! hey! why, fath, we may chance to be married, if the old folks agree together.

Jenny. And suppose I won't be married to you:

Tim. Nay, Miss Suck, I can't help it, fath and sole. But father and mother bid me come a-court-ing; and if you won't ha' me, I'll tell father so.

Jenny. You are in a woundy hurry, methinks.

Tim. Not I, fath! you may stay as long as——

Enter WAITER.

Wait. There's a woman without wants to speak with Mr. Timothy Gazette.

Tim. That's I. I am glad on't. Well, Miss Suck, your servant. You'll think about it, and let's know your mind when I come back.—Cod, I don't care whether she likes me or no. I don't like her half so well as Mally Pengrouse—Well, your servant, Miss Suck.

[*Exit Tim.*]

Jenny. Was there ever such an unlick'd cub? I don't think his fortune a sufficient reward for sacrificing my person to such a booby; but as he has money enough, it shall go hard but I please myself: I fear I was a little too backward with my gentleman; but,

however, a favourable answer to his last question will soon settle matters.

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Now, Jenny, what news, child? are things fix'd; are you ready for the nuptial knot?

Jenny. We are in a fair way: 'I thought to 'have quicken'd my swain's advances by a little affected coyness, but the trap would not take: 'I expect him back in a minute, and then leave it to my management.

Jenk. Where is he gone?

Jenny. The drawer call'd him to some woman.

Jenk. Woman! he neither knows nor is known by any body here. What can this mean? no counterplot? but, pox, that's impossible! you have not blabb'd, Jenny?

Jenny. My interest would prevent me.

Jenk. Upon that security any woman may, I think, be trusted. I must after him tho'. [*Exit.*

Jenny. I knew the time when Jenkins would not have left me so hastily: 'tis odd that the same 'cause that increases the passion in one sex, should destroy it in the other; the reason is above my 'reach, but the fact I am a severe witness of. Heigh ho!

Enter HARTOP as Sir PENURIOUS, and Sir GREGORY GAZETTE.

Har. And so, you knight, says he—you know, knight, what low dogs the ministers were then: how

does your pot—a pot, you, that they put over the fire to boil broth and meat in—you have seen a pot, you knight—how does your pot boil these troublesome times? hey you! Ecod, my lord, says he, I don't know, I seldom go into my kitchen. A kitchen, you knight, is a place where they dress victuals, roast and boil, and so forth: Ecod, says he, I seldom go into the kitchen—But I suppose, the scum is uppermost still! Hey, you knight! what, ecod, hey! But where's your son, Sir Gregory?

Sir Greg. Good now, good now, where's Tim, Miss Sukey? lack-a-day, what's become of Tim?

Jenny. Gone out a tiny bit, he'll be here presently.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now! Well, and how, Miss Sukey—has Tim? has he! well, and what, you have—wonderful?

Enter a SERVANT with a Letter.

Serv. Sir, I was commanded to deliver this into your own hands, by Mr. Jenkins.

Har. Hey, you! what a letter? ecod so! Any answer, you? hey!

Serv. None, Sir.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, Sir Penurious is busy! Well, Miss, and did Tim do the thing? did he please you? Come now, tell us the whole story: wonderful! rare news for dame Winny! ha, Tim's father's own son! But come, whisper—ay.

Har. “I have only time to tell you that your scheme is blasted: this instant I encounter'd Mrs. Penelope Trifle, with her niece; they will soon

D

"be with you."—So then, all's over; but let's see what expedition will do——Well, you knight, hey! what, have they settled? Is the girl willing?

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! right as my leg! ah, Tim, little did I think—But, lack-a-day, I wonder where the boy is! let's seek him.

Har. Agreed, you knight; hey, come.

Enter JENKINS.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, here's Mr. Jenkins. Good now, have you seen Tim?

Jenk. Your curiosity shall be immediately satisfied; but I must first have a word with Sir Penurious.

Har. Well you! what, hey! any news, Dick?

Jenk. Better than you could hope; your rival is disposed of.

Har. Dispos'd of! how?

Jenk. Marry'd by this time, you rogue! The woman that wanted him was no other than Mally Pengrouse, who trudg'd it up all the way after him, as Tim says: I have recommended them to my chaplain, and before this the business is done.

Har. Bravissimo! you rogue! but how shall I get off with the knight?

Jenk. Nay, that must be your contrivance.

Har. I have it—Suppose I was to own the whole design to Sir Gregory, as our plan has not succeeded with his son; and, as he seems to have a tolerable regard for me, it is possible he may assist my scheme on Sir Penurious.

Jenk. 'Tis worth trying, however:—But he comes.

Sir Greg. Well, good now, Mr. Jenkins have you seen Tim? I can't think where the boy——

Har. 'Tis now time, Sir Gregory, to set you clear with respect to some particulars:—I am now no longer Sir Penurious Trifle, but your friend and relation Jack Hartop.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now, cousin Hartop! as I am a living man—hey—Well, but good now! how, Mr. Jenkins, hey?

Jenk. The story, Sir Gregory, is rather too long to tell you now: but in two words, My friend Hartop has very long had a passion for Miss Trifle, and was apprehensive your son's application would destroy his views—which in order to defeat, he assum'd the character of Sir Penurious!—but he is so captivated with your integrity and friendship, that he rather chooses to forego his own interest, than interrupt the happiness of your son.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now, that's kind! who could have thought it, cousin Hartop? lack-a-day! Well, but where's Tim? hey, good now! and who are you?

Jenk. This, Sir, is Jenny, the handmaid of the house.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! a pestelent hussey! Ah, Hartop, you are a wag! a pize of your pots, and your royal oaks!—lack-a-day, who could ha' thought——ah, Jenny, you're a——But where's Tim?

Enter Sir GREGORY's Servant.

Serv. Wounds, Master! never stir alive if Master Tim has na gone and marry'd Mally Pengrouse.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! how, sirrah, how! good now, good now, cousin Hartop—Mally Pengrouse! who the dickens is she?

Serv. Master Timothy's sweetheart in Cornwall.

Sir Greg. And how came she here? lack-a-day, cousin!

Serv. She tramp'd it up after master. Master Timothy is without, and says as how they be marry'd:—I wanted him to come in, but he's afraid you'll knock'n down.

Sir Greg. Knock'n down!—Good now, let me come at him! I'll—ah, rogue!—Lack-a-day, cousin, show me where he is! I'll—

Har. Moderate your fury, good Sir Gregory; consider, it is an evil without a remedy.

Sir Greg. But what will Dame Winny say?—Good now, such a disparagement to—and then, what will Sir Penurious say? lack-a-day, I am almost distracted! And you, you lubberly dog! why did not you—I'll—ah, cousin Hartop, cousin Hartop! good now, good now!

Har. Dear Sir, be calm;—this is no such surprising matter: we have such instances in the newspapers every day.

Sir Greg. Good now! no, cousin, no.

Har. Indeed, Sir Gregory, it was but last week that Lord Lofty's son marry'd his mother's maid;

and Lady Betty Forward run away, not a month ago, with her uncle's butler.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! what, in the news?—Good now, that's some comfort, however;—but what will Sir Penurious—

Har. As to that, leave him to me; I have a project to prevent his laughing at you, I'll warrant.

Sir Greg. But how? how, cousin Hartop, how?

Har. Sir Gregory, d'ye think me your friend?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! ay, cousin, ay.

Har. And would you, in return, serve me in a circumstance that can't injure yourself?

Sir Greg. Good now, to be sure, cousin.

Har. Will you then permit me to assume the figure of your son, and so pay my addresses to Miss Trifle?—I was pretty happy in the imitation of her father; and if I could impose upon your sagacity, I shall find less difficulty with your brother knight.

Sir Greg. Good now! Tim! ah, you could not touch Tim.

Har. I warrant you. But, see, the young gentleman.

Enter TIM.

Sir Greg. Ah! Tim, Tim! little did I—Good now, good now!

Tim. I could not help it now, fath and sole: but if you'll forgive me this time, I'll never do so no more.

Sir Greg. Well, well, if thee can'st forgive thyself, I can forgive thee; but thank my cousin Hartop.

Har. Oh, Sir! if you are satisfy'd, I am rewarded. I wish you joy; joy to you, child.

Sir Greg. Thanks, cousin Hartop.

Enter WAITER.

Wait. Sir, Mrs. Penelope Trifle, with her niece, being come to town, and hearing your Worship was in the House, would be glad to pay you their compliments.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! wonderful!—here we are all topsy-turvey again!—What can be done now, cousin Hartop?

Har. Dick! show the ladies in here; but delay them a little. The luckiest incident in the world, Sir Gregory!—If you will be kind enough to lend Jenkins your dress, and Master Timothy will lend me his, I'll make up matters in a moment.

Sir Greg. Ay, ay, cousin,

Tim. Fath and sole, you shall have mine dire—

Har. No, no.—Step into the next room a minute, Sir Greogory.

Sir Greg. Ay, aye, where you will.

Tim. Fath, here will be choice sport. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Mrs. PENELOPE and SUCK, with WAITER.

Wait. The gentlemen will wait on you presently.—Would you choose any refreshment?

Suck. A draught of ale, friend, for I'm main dry.

Mrs. Pen. Fie! fie! niece! is that liquor for a young lady? Don't disparage your family and breeding. The person is to be born that ever saw me

touch any thing stronger than water till I was three-and-twenty.

Suck. Troth, aunt, that's so long ago, that I think there's few people alive who can remember what you did then.

Mrs. Pen. How! gillflirt?—none of your fleers! I am glad here's a husband coming that will take you down: Your tantrums!—You are grown too headstrong and robust for me.

Suck. Gad, I believe you would be glad to be taken down the same way!

Mrs. Pen. Oh! you are a pert—But see your lover approaches. Now Sukey, be careful, child: None of your—

Enter JENKINS as Sir GREGORY, and HARTOP as TIM.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, lady! I rejoice to see you; wonderful! and your niece!—Tim, the ladies.

Har. Your servant, Mistress!—I am glad to see you, Miss Suck. (*Salutes her.*) Fath and sole, Mistress, Suck's a fine young woman, more or less!

Suck. Yes, I am well enough, I believe.

Jenk. But, Lady, where's my brother Trifle! where is Sir Penurious?

Suck. Father's at home, in expectation of you; and aunt and I be come to town to make preparations.

Jenk. Ay, wonderful!—Pray, Lady, shall I, go ' now! crave a word in private? Tim, will you and your sweetheart draw back a little?

Har. Yes, father: Come, Miss, will you jog a tiny bit this way?

Suck. With all my heart.

Jenk. There is, Lady, a wonderful affair has happen'd, good now! Son Tim has fallen in love with a young woman at his uncle's, and 'tis partly to prevent bad consequences, that I am, lack-a-day! so hasty to match him: and one of my men, good now! tells me that he has seen the wench since we have been in town; she has followed us here, sure as a gun, lady! If Tim sees the girl, he'll never marry your niece.

Mrs. Pen. It is indeed, Sir Gregory Gazette, a most critical conjuncture, and requires the most mature deliberation.

Jenk. — Deliberation! lack-a-day, Lady, whilst we deliberate the boy will be lost.

Mrs. Pen. Why, Sir Gregory Gazette, what operations can we determine upon?

Jenk. Lack-a-day! I know but one.

Mrs. Pen. Administer your proposition, Sir Gregory Gazette: you will have my concurrence, Sir, in any thing that does not derogate from the regulations of conduct; for it would be most preposterous in one of my character, to deviate from the strictest attention.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, lady, no such matter is wanted. But, good now! could not we tack the young couple together directly? your brother and I have already agreed.

Mrs. Pen. Are the previous preliminaries settled, Sir Gregory Gazette?

Jenk. Good now ! as firm as a rock, lady.

Mrs. Pen. Why, then, to preserve your son, and accomplish the union between our families, I have no objections to the acceleration of their nuptials, provided the child is inclined, and a minister may be procur'd.

Jenk. Wonderful ! you are very good, good now ! there has been one match already in the house to-day ; we may have the same far on. Here ! Tim ! and young gentlewoman !—Well, Miss ! wonderful, and how ? has Tim ? hey, boy ! Is not Miss a fine young lady ?

Har. Fath and sole, father, Miss is a charming young woman ; all red and white, like Mally—Hum !

Jenk. Hush, Tim ! Well, and Miss, how does my boy ? he's an honest hearty lad ? Has he, good now ! had the art ? How d' ye like him, young gentlewoman ?

Suck. Liken ? well enough, I think.

Jenk. Why then, Miss, with your leave, your aunt and I here have agreed, if you are willing, to have the wedding over directly.

Suck. Gad ! with all my heart. Ask the young man.

Har. Fath and sole, just as you please ; to-day, to-morrow, or when you will, more or less.

Jenk. Good now, good now ! then get you in there, there you will find one to do your business : wonderful ! matters will soon be managed within. Well, lady, this was good now, so kind ! Lack-a-

day! I verily believe if dame Winny was dead, that I should be glad to lead up such another dance with you, lady.

Mrs. Pen. You are, Sir, something too precipitate: Nor would there, did circumstances concur, as you insinuate, be so absolute a certitude, that I, who have rejected so many matches, should instantaneously succumb.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, lady, good now! I—

Mrs. Pen. No, Sir; I would have you instructed, that had not Penelope Trifle made irrefragable resolutions, she need not so long have preserved her family surname.

Jenk. Wonerful! why, I was only——

Mrs. Pen. Nor has the title of Lady Gazette such resplendent charms, or such bewitching allurements, as to throw me at once into the arms of Sir Gregory.

Jenk. Good now! who says——

Mrs. Pen. Could wealth, beauty, or titles superior to perhaps——

Enter Sir GREGORY, ROGER, and TIM.

Tim. Yes, indeed, father; Mr. Hartop knew on't as well as I, and Mr. Jenkins got us a parson.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! a rare couple of friends! But I'll be even with them! I'll marr their market! Master Jenkins, you have fobb'd me finely.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, what's the matter now?

Sir Greg. Come, come, none of your lack-a-days! none of your gambols, nor your tricks to me: Good now, good now! give me my cloaths! here, take

your tawdry trappings? I have found you out at last: I'll be no longer your property.

Jenk. Wonderful! what's all this, lady? Good now, good now! what's here! a stage play?

Sir Greg. Play me no plays; but give me my wig? and your precious friend my loving cousin, pize on the kindred, let'n—

Jenk. Good now, good now! what are these folks? as sure as a gun, they're mad.

Sir Greg. Mad! no, no; we are neither mad nor fools: no thanks to you, tho'.

Mrs. Pen. What is all this; can you unravel this perplexity, untwine this mystery, Sir Gregory Gazette?

Sir Greg. He Sir Gregory Gazette? Jack-a-day, lady! you are trick'd, imposed upon, bamboozled: Good now, good now! 'tis I am Sir Gregory Gazette.

Mrs. Pen. How!

Tim. Fath and sole, 'tis true, mistress; and I am his son Tim, and will swear it.

Mrs. Pen. Why, isn't Mr. Timothy Gazette with my niece Susannah Trifle?

Tim. Who, me! Lord, no, 'tis none of I, it is cousin Hartop in my cloaths.

Mrs. Pen. What's this? and pray, who—

Jenk. Why, as I see the affair is concluded, you may, Madam, call me Jenkins. Come, Hartop, you may now throw off your disguise; the knight had like to have embarrassed us.

Mrs. Pen. How, Mr. Jenkins! and would you, Sir, participate of a plot to—

Har. Madam, in the issue, your family will, I hope, have no great reason to repent. I always had the greatest veneration for Miss Penelope Trifle's understanding; the highest esteem for her virtues can intitle me to the honour of being regarded as her relation :—

Mrs. Pen. Sir, I shall determine on nothing, 'till I am apprised of my brother's resolution.

Har. For that we must wait. Sir Gregory, I must intreat you and your son's pardon for some little liberties I have taken with you both. Mr. Jenkins, I have the highest obligation to your friendship; and, Miss, when we become a little better acquainted, I flatter myself the change will not prove unpleasant.

Suck. I know nothing at all about it.

Har. Sir Gregory, we shall have your company at dinner?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, no, no, that boy has spoil'd my stomach.—Come, Tim fetch thy rib, and let us be jogging towards Wales; but how thou wilt get off with thy mother—

Tim. Never fear, father—

Since you have been pleas'd our nuptial knot to bless,
We shall be happy all our lives—more or less—

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PARSONS'S MINOR THEATRE.



Dupré del.

Engraved for J. Parsons, at Paternoster Row 1794.

Angell sc.

THE LAME LOVER.

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

WRITTEN BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL HAY-MARKET.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London :

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,
FOR J. PARSONS, No 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1794.

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THE LAME LOVER.

AT his own theatre in the Hay-market, the late Samuel Foote brought out this diverting comedy in the year 1770.

The portraits of Sir Luke Limp, Circuit, and his amiable partner, are drawn with a master-hand. It is true, material changes mark the progress of time; but these pictures are still entire, and their colouring as fresh as ever.

It is a subject of no small regret, that, at this moment, there are many who bear too strong a resemblance to our author's Circuit; held up as a wretch, well studied in the school of iniquity and quibble, and deeply engaged in all the contemptible arts which mark the practice of certain leeches, who cast a stigma on a profession in itself honourable, but which is brought into disgrace by harpies of this description, as unworthy of their calling as detestable to society at large.

But the time is at hand when the career of these small gentry will be effectually checked.—Enquiry is at work, and reformation is not far distant. In the mean time an effectual bar is thrown down, which needy and ignorant pretenders are forbidden to pass, however they may be inclined to follow the example of their more fortunate masters, who have, in many instances, been taken from the task of brushing the jackets of their superiors in the hall; to pursue that of filling up their parchments at the desk; with this difference only:—in the former capacity, the dirt settled on the hand; in the latter, it became ingrafted in the heart.

Dramatis Personae.

HAY-MARKET.

Men.

Sir Luke Limp,	- MR. FOOTE
Serjeant Circuit,	- MR. VANDERMERE
Colonel Secret,	- MR. ROBSON
Jack, -	- MR. WESTON
Mr. Woodford,	- MR. KNOWLES
Mr. Fairplay,	- MR. WHEELER
First Servant,	- MR. DANCER
Second Servant,	- MR. GRIFFITHS.

Women.

Mrs. Circuit,	- MRS. GARDNER
Charlotte,	- MRS. JEWELL
Mrs. Simper,	- MRS. SAUNDERS
Betty,	- MRS. READ.

P R O L O G U E.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. GENTLEMAN.

PROLOGUES, like cards of compliment, we find
 Most as unmeaning as politely kind ;
 To beg a favour, or to plead excuse,
 Of both appears to be the gen'ral use.

Shall my words, tipt with flattery, prepare
 A kind exertion of your tend'rest care ?
 Shall I present our Author to your sight,
 All pale and trembling for his fate this night ?
 Shall I solicit the most pow'rful arms
 To aid his cause—the force of beauty's charms !

Or tell each critic, his approving taste
 Must give the Sterling stamp, wherever plac'd ?
 This might be done—but so to seek applause
 Argues a conscious weakness in the cause.
 No—let the Muse in simple truth appear,
Reason and *Nature* are the judges here :
 If by their strict and self-describing laws,
 The sev'ral characters to-night she draws ;
 If from the whole a pleasing piece is made,
 On the true principles of light and shade ;
 Struck with the harmony of just design,
 Your eyes—your ears—your hearts, will all combine

To grant applause :—but if an erring hand
Gross disproportion marks in motley band,
If the group'd figures false connections show,
And glaring colours without meaning glow ;
Your wounded feelings, turn'd a diff'rent way,
Will justly damn—th' *abortion* of a play.

As Farquhar has observ'd, our English law,
Like a fair spreading oak, the Muse should draw,
By Providence design'd, and wisdom made
For honesty to thrive beneath its shade ;
Yet from its boughs some insects shelter find,
Dead to each nobler feeling of the mind,
Who thrive, alas ! too well, and never cease
To prey on justice, property, and peace.

At such to-night, with other *legal* game,
Our vent'rous author takes satiric aim ;
And brings he hopes, originals to view,
Not pilfers from th' Old Magpie nor the New *.
But will to Candour cheerfully submit ;
She reigns in boxes, galleries, and pit.

* Alluding to Mr. Garrick's Prologue to the Jubilee.



THE LAME LOVER.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter SERJEANT CIRCUIT and CHARLOTTE.

Charlotte.

I TELL you, Sir, his love to me is all a pretence ; it is amazing that you, who are so acute, so quick in discerning on other occasions, should be so blind upon this.

Serj. But where are your proofs, Charlotte? What signifies your opening matters which your evidence cannot support?

Char. Surely, Sir, strong circumstances in every court should have weight.

Serj. So they have collaterally, child, that is, by way, as it were, of corroboration, or where matters are doubtful ; then indeed, as Plowden wisely observes, “ *Les circonstances aout beaucoup depoids aux faits.* ”—You understand me?

Char. Not perfectly well.

Serj. Then to explain by case in point; A, we will suppose, my dear, robs B of a watch upon Hounslow Heath—dy'e mind, child?

Char. I do, Sir.

Serj. A is taken up and is indicted; B swears positively to the identity of A.—Dy'e observe?

Char. Attentively.

Serj. Then what does me A, but sets up the alibi C to defeat the affidavit of B.—You take me?

Char. Clearly.

Serj. So far you see then the balance is even.

Char. True.

Serj. But then to turn the scale, child, against A in favour of B, they produce the circumstance D, viz. B's watch found in the pocket of A; upon which the testimony of C being contradicted by B,—no, by D,—why then A, that is to say C,—no D,—joining B, they convict C,—no, no, A,—against the affidavit of C.—So this being pretty clear, child, I leave the application to you.

Char. Very obliging, Sir. But suppose now, Sir, it should appear that the attention of Sir Luke Limp is directed to some other object, would not that induce you to—

Serj. Other object! Where?

Char. In this very house.

Serj. Here! why the girl is non compos; there's nobody here, child, but a parcel of Abigails.

Char. No, Sir?

Serj. No.

Char. Yes, Sir, one person else.

Serj. Who is that?

Char. But remember, Sir, my accusation is confined to Sir Luke.

Serj. Well, well.

Char. Suppose then, Sir, those powerful charms which made a conquest of you, may have extended their empire over the heart of Sir Luke.

Serj. Why, hussy, you don't hint at your mother-in-law?

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I do.

Serj. Ay; why this is point blank treason against my sovereign authority: but can you, Charlotte, bring proof of any overt acts?

Char. Overt acts!

Serj. Ay; that is, any declaration by writing, or even word of mouth, is sufficient; then let 'em demur if they dare.

Char. I can't say that, Sir; but another organ has been pretty explicit.

Serj. Which?

Char. In those cases a very infallible one—the eye.

Serj. Pshaw! nonsense and stuff.—The eye!—The eye has no authority in a court of law.

Char. Perhaps not, Sir; but it is a decisive evidence in a court of love.

Serj. Hark you, hussy, why you would not file an information against the virtue of Madam your mother; you would not insinuate that she has been guilty of crim. con.?

Char. Sir, you mistake me; it is not the lady, but the gentleman, I am about to impeach.

Serj. Have a care, Charlotte! I see on what ground your action is founded—jealousy.

Char. You were never more deceiv'd in your life; for it is impossible, my dear Sir, that jealousy can subsist without love.

Serj. Well.

Char. And from that passion (thank heaven) I am pretty free at present.

Serj. Indeed!

Char. A sweet object to excite tender desires!

Serj. And why not hussy?

Char. First, as to his years.

Serj. What then?

Char. I own, Sir, age procures honour, but I believe it is very rarely productive of love.

Serj. Mighty well.

Char. And tho' the loss of a leg can't be imputed to Sir Luke Limp as a fault—

Serj. How!

Char. I hope, Sir, at least you will allow it a misfortune.

Serj. Indeed!

Char. A pretty thing truly, for a girl, at my time of life, to be ty'd to a man with one foot in the grave.

Serj. One foot in the grave! the rest of his body is not a whit the nearer for that.—There has been only an execution issued against part of his personals, his real estate is unencumbered and free—besides, you see he does not mind it a whit, but is as alert, and as merry, as a defendant after non-suiting a plaintiff for omitting an S.

Char. O, Sir! I know how proud Sir Luke is of his leg, and have often heard him declare, that he would not change his bit of timber for the best flesh and bone in the kingdom.

Serj. There's a hero for you!

Char. To be sure, sustaining unavoidable evils with constancy is a certain sign of greatness of mind.

Serj. Doubtless.

Char. But then to derive a vanity from a misfortune, will not I'm afraid be admitted as a vast instance of wisdom, and indeed looks as if the man had nothing better to distinguish himself by.

Serj. How does that follow!

Char. By inuendo.

Serj. Negatur.

Char. Besides, Sir, I have other proofs of your hero's vanity, not inferior to that I have mention'd.

Serj. Cite them.

Char. The paltry ambition of levying and following titles.

Serj. Titles! I don't understand you.

Char. I mean the poverty of fastening in public upon men of distinction, for no other reason but because of their rank; adhering to Sir John till the Baronet is superseded by my Lord; quitting the puny Peer for an Earl; and sacrificing all three to a Duke.

Serj. Keeping good company! a laudable ambition.

Char. True, Sir, if the virtues that procur'd the father a peerage could with that be entail'd on the son.

Serj. Have a care, hussy—there are severe laws against speaking evil of dignities—

Char. Sir!

Serj. Scandalum magnatum is a statute must not be trifled with: why, you are not one of those vulgar sluts that think a man the worse for being a Lord?

Char. No, Sir; I am contented with only not thinking him the better.

Serj. For all this, I believe, hussy, a right honourable proposal would soon make you alter your mind.

Char. Not unless the proposer had other qualities than what he possesses by patent. Besides, Sir, you know Sir Luke is a devotee to the bottle.

Serj. Not a whit the less honest for that.

Char. It occasions one evil at least; that when under its influence, he generally reveals all, sometimes more than he knows.

Serj. Proofs of an open temper, you baggage; but, come, come, all these are but trifling objections.

Char. You mean, Sir, they prove the object a trifle.

Serj. Why, you pert jade, do you play on my words? I say Sir Luke is—

Char. Nobody.

Serj. Nobody! how the deuse do you make that out?—He is neither person attainted or outlaw'd; may in any of his majesty's courts sue or be sued, appear by attorney or in propria persona; can acquire, buy, procure, purchase, possess, and inherit, not only personalities, such as goods and chattels, but

even realities, as all lands, tenements, and hereditaments, whatsoever and wheresoever.

Char. But, Sir—

Serj. Nay, further child, he may sell, give, bestow, bequeath, devise, demise, lease, or to farm, let, ditto lands, to any person whomsoever—and—

Char. Without doubt, Sir; but there are notwithstanding in this town a great number of nobodies, not described by Lord Coke.

Serj. Hey!

Char. There is your next-door neighbour, Sir Harry Hen, an absolute blank.

Serj. How so, Mrs. Pert?

Char. What, Sir! a man who is not suffer'd to hear, see, smell, or in short to enjoy the free use of any one of his senses; who, instead of having a positive will of his own, is deny'd even a paltry negative; who can neither resolve or reply, consent or deny, without first obtaining the leave of his lady: an absolute monarch to sink into the sneaking state of being a slave to one of his subject—Oh fye!

Serj. Why, to be sure, Sir Harry Hen, is, as I may say—

Char. Nobody, Sir, in the fullest sense of the word—Then your client Lord Solo.

Serj. Heyday!—Why, you would not annihilate a peer of the realm, with a prodigious estate and an allow'd judge too of the elegant arts?

Char. O yes, Sir, I am no stranger to that nobleman's attributes; but then, Sir, please to consider, his power as a peer he gives up to a proxy; the di-

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rection

reſtoration of his eſtate to a rapacious, artful attorney: and as to his ſkill in the elegant arts, I preſume you confine them to painting and muſic. He is directed in the firſt by Mynheer Van Eiſel, a Dutch dauber; and in the laſt is but the echo of Signora Florenza, his Lordſhip's miſtreſs, and an opera ſinger.

Serj. Mercy upon us! at what a rate the jade runs!

Char. In ſhort, Sir, I define every individual, who ceasing to act for himſelf, becomes the tool, the mere engine, of another man's will, to be nothing more than a cypher.

Serj. At this rate the jade will half unpeople the world: but what is all this to Sir Luke? to him not one of your caſes apply.

Char. Every one—Sir Luke has not a firſt principle in his whole compoſition; not only his pleaſures, but even his paſſions, are prompted by others; and he is as much directed to the objects of his love and his hatred, as in his eating, drinking, and ſleeping. Nay, though he is active, and eternally buſy, yet his own private affairs are neglected; and he would not ſcruple to break an appointment that was to determine a conſiderable part of his property, in order to exchange a couple of hounds for a lord, or to buy a pad-nag for a lady. In a word—but he's at hand, and will explain himſelf beſt; I hear his ſtump on the ſtairs.

Serj. I hope you will preſerve a little decency before your lover at leaſt.

Char. Lover! ha, ha, ha!

Enter Sir LUKE LIMP.

Sir. Luke. Mr. Serjeant your slave—Ah! are you there my little—O Lord! Miss, let me tell you something for fear of forgetting—Do you know that you are new-christen'd, and have had me for a gossip?

Char. Christen'd! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Then lend me your ear—Why, last night, as Colonel Kill 'em, Sir William Weezy, Lord Frederick Foretop, and I, were carelessly sliding the Ranelagh round, picking our teeth, after a damn'd muzzy dinner at Boodle's, who should trip by but an abbess, well known about town, with a smart little nun in her suit. Says Weezy (who between ourselves, is as husky as hell) Who is that? odds flesh, she's a delicate wench! Zounds! cried Lord Frederick, where can Weezy have been, not to have seen the Harrietta before? for you must know Frederick is a bit of Macaroni, and adores the soft Italian termination in *a*.

Char. He does?

Sir Luke. Yes, a delitanti all over.—Before? replied Weezy; crush me if ever I saw any thing half so handsome before!—No! replied I in an instant; Colonel, what will Weezy say when he sees the Charlotta?—Hey! you little—

Char. Meaning me, I presume.

Sir Luke. Without doubt; and you have been toasted by that name ever since.

Serj. What a vast fund of spirits he has!

Sir Luke. And why not, my old splitter of causes?

Serj. I was just telling Charlotte, that you was not a whit the worse for the loss.

Sir Luke. The worse! much the better, my dear. Consider, I can have neither strain, splint, spavin, or gout; have no fear of corns, kibes, or that another man should kick my shins, or tread on my toes.

Serj. Right.

Sir Luke. What, d'ye think I would change with Bill Spindle for one of his drumsticks, or chop with Lord Lumber for both of his logs?

Serj. No!

Sir Luke. No, damn it, I am much better.—Look there—Ha!—What is there I am not able to do! To be sure I am a little awkward at running; but then to make me amends, I'll hop with any man in town for his sum.

Serj. Ay, and I'll go his halves.

Sir Luke. Then as to your dancing, I am cut out at Madam Cornelly's, I grant, because of the crowd; but as far as a private set of six couple, or moving a chair-minuet, match me who can.

Char. A chair-minuet! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Why, child, all grace is confined to the motion of the head, arms, and chest, which may sitting be as fully displayed as if one had as many legs as a polympus—As thus—tol de rol—don't you see?

Serj. Very plain.

Sir Luke. A leg! a redundancy! a mere nothing at all. Man is from nature an extravagant creature.

In my opinion, we might all be full as well as we are with but half the things that we have.

Char. Ay, Sir Luke; how do you prove that?

Sir Luke. By constant experience.—You must have seen the man who makes and uses pens without hands.

Serj. I have.

Sir Luke. And not a twelvemonth ago, I lost my way in a fog, at Mile-end, and was conducted to my house in May-Fair by a man as blind as a beetle.

Serj. Wonderful!

Sir Luke. And as to hearing and speaking, those organs are of no manner of use in the world.

Serj. How!

Sir Luke. If you doubt it, I will introduce you to a whole family, dumb as oysters, and deaf as the dead, who chatter from morning till night by only the help of their fingers.

Serj. Why, Charlotte, these are cases in point.

Sir Luke. Oh! clear as a trout-stream; and it is not only, my little Charlotte, that this piece of timber answers every purpose, but it has procured me many a bit of fun in my time.

Serj. Ay!

Sir Luke. Why, it was but last summer at Tunbridge, we were plagued the whole season with a bullet-headed Swiss from the canton of Bern, who was always boasting what and how much he dared do; and then, as to pain, no Stoic, not Diogenes held it more in contempt. By gods, he was no more

minds it dan nothings at all—So foregad, I gave my German a challenge.

Serj. As how!—Mind, Charlotte.

Sir Luke. Why, to drive a corkin-pin into the calves of our legs.

Serj. Well, well.

Sir Luke. Mine you may imagine, was easily done—but when it came to the Baron—

Serj. Ay, ay.

Sir Luke. Our modern Cato soon lost his coolness and courage, screw'd his nose up to his foretop, rapp'd out a dozen oaths in High Dutch, limp'd away to his lodgings, and was there laid up for a month—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT, and delivers a card to Sir Luke.

Sir Luke reads.—“ Sir Gregory Goose desires the honour of Sir Luke Limp's company to dine. An answer is desired.” Gadso! a little unlucky; i have been engag'd for these three weeks.

Serj. What, I find Sir Gregory is return'd for the corporation of *Flecsun*.

Sir Luke. Is he so? Oh ho!—That alters the case.—George, give my compliments to Sir Gregory, and I'll certainly come and dine there. Order Joe to run to alderman Inkle's in Threadneedle-street; sorry can't wait upon him, but confin'd to bed two days with *new influenza*.

Char. You make light, Sir Luke, of these sort of engagements.

Sir Luke. What can a man do? These damn'd fellows (when one has the misfortune to meet them)

take scandalous advantage; tease, when will you do me the honour, pray, Sir Luke, to take a bit of mutton with me? do you name the day.—They are as bad as a beggar, who attacks your coach at the mounting of a hill; there is no getting rid of them, without a penny to one and a promise to t'other.

Serj. True; and then for such a time too—three weeks! I wonder they expect folks to remember. It is like a retainer in Michaelmas term for the summer assizes.

Sir Luke. Not but upon these occasions, no man in England is more punctual than——

Enter a SERVANT, who gives Sir Luke a letter.

From whom?

Serv. Earl of Brentford. The servant waits for an answer.

Sir Luke. Answer!—By your leave, Mr. Serjeant and Charlotte (*Reads.*) “Taste for music—Mons. Duport—fail—Dinner upon table at five”—Gadso! I hope Sir Gregory’s servant an’t gone.

Serv. Immediately upon receiving the answer.

Sir Luke. Run after him as fast as you can—tell him, quite in despair—recollect an engagement that can’t in nature be missed,—and return in an instant.

Char. You see, Sir, the Knight must give way for my Lord.

Sir Luke. No, faith, it is not that, my dear Charlotte; you saw that was quite an extempore business.—No, hang it, no, it is not for the title; but, to tell

you the truth, Brentford has more wit than any man in the world; it is that makes me fond of his house.

Char. By the choice of his company he gives an unanswerable instance of that.

Sir Luke. You are right, my dear girl. But now to give you a proof of his wit; You know Brentford's finances are a little out of repair, which procures him some visits that he would very gladly excuse.

Serj. What need he fear? His person is sacred; for by the tenth of William and Mary——

Sir Luke. He knows that well enough; but for all that——

Serj. Indeed, by a late act of his own house, (which does them infinite honour) his goods or chattels may be——

Sir Luke. Seiz'd upon when they can find them; but he lives in ready-furnish'd lodgings, and hires his coach by the month.

Serj. Nay, if the sheriff return "non inventus."—

Sir Luke. A pox o'your law, you make me lose sight of my story. One morning, a Welch coachmaker came with his bill to my Lord, whose name was unluckily Loyd. My Lord had the man up. You are call'd, I think, Mr. Loyd?—At your Lordship's service, my Lord.—What, Loyd with an L?—It was with an L indeed, my Lord.—Because in your part of the world I have heard that Loyd and Floyd were synonymous, the very same names.—Very often, indeed, my Lord.—But you always spell yours with an L?—Always.—That, Mr. Loyd, is a

little unlucky; for you must know I am now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F; but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L.—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. There was no overtaking the Servant.

Sir Luke. That is unlucky: Tell my Lord I'll attend him.—I'll call on Sir Gregory myself.

Serj. Why, you won't leave us, Sir Luke?

Sir Luke. Pardon, dear Serjeant and Charlotte; have a thousand things to do for half a million of people, positively: promised to procure a husband for Lady Cicely Sulky, and match a coach-horse for Brigadier Whip; after that, must run into the city to borrow a thousand for young At-all at Almack's; send a Cheshire cheese by the stage to Sir Timothy Tankard in Suffolk; and get at the Herald's office a coat of arms to clap on the coach of Billy Bengal, a nabob newly arriv'd: so you see I have not a moment to lose.

Serj. True, true.

Sir Luke. At your toilet to-morrow at ten you may—

Enter a SERVANT abruptly and runs against Sir Luke.

Can't you see where you are running, you rascal!

Serv. Sir, his Grace the Duke of—

Sir Luke. Grace! where is he?—Where—

Serv. In his coach at the door.—If you an't better engag'd, would be glad of your company to go into the city, and take a dinner at Dolly's.

Sir Luke. In his own coach, did you say?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Sir Luke. With the coronets—or—

Serv. I believe so.

Sir Luke. There's no resisting of that.—Bid Joe run to Sir Gregory Goose's.

Serv. He is already gone to Alderman Inkle's.

Sir Luke. Then do you step to the Knight—hey!—no—you must go to my Lord's—hold, hold, no—I have it—Step first to Sir Greg's, then pop in at Lord Brentford's just as the company are going to dinner.

Serv. What shall I say to Sir Gregory?

Sir Luke. Any thing—what I told you before.

Serv. And what to my Lord?

Sir Luke. What!—Why tell him that my uncle from Epsom—no—that won't do, for he knows I don't care a farthing for him—hey!—Why tell him—hold, I have it.—Tell him, that as I was going into my chair to obey his commands, I was arrested by a couple of bailiffs, forced into a hackney-coach, and carried to the Py'd Bull in the Borough; I beg ten thousand pardons for making his Grace wait, but his Grace knows my misfor—— [Exit *Sir Luke*.]

Char. Well, Sir, what d'ye think of the proofs? I flatter myself I have pretty well established my case.

Servj. Why, hussy, you have hit upon points; but then they are but trifling flaws, they don't vitiate the title, that stands unimpeach'd; and—But, Madam, your mother.

Enter Mrs. CIRCUIT.

Mrs. Cir. What have you done with the Knight?

—Why, you have not let him depart ?

Char. It was not in my power to keep him.

Mrs. Cir. I don't wonder at that ; but what took him away ?

Char. What will at any time take him away—a Duke at the door.

Mrs. Cir. Are you certain of that ?

Serj. Why, truly, chuck, his retreat was rather precipitate for a man that is just going to be marry'd.

Mrs. Cir. The prospect of marriage does not always prove the strongest attachment.

Serj. Pardon me, lovee; the law allows no higher consideration than marriage.

Mrs. Cir. Pshaw!

Serj. Insomuch, that if Duke A was to intermarry with chambermaid B, difference of condition would prove no bar to the settlement.

Mrs. Cir. Indeed!

Serj. Ay; and this was held to be law by Chief Baron Bind 'em, to the famous case of the Marquis of Cully and Fanny Flip-flap, the French dancer.

Mrs. Cir. The greater blockhead the Baron: but don't pester me with your odious law-cases.—Did not you tell me you was to go to Kingston to-day to try the crown causes?

Serj. I was begg'd to attend for fear his Lordship should not be able to sit; but if it proves inconvenient to you—

Mrs. Cir. To me! Oh, by no means in the world; I am too good a subject to desire the least delay in the law's execution. And when d'ye set out?

Serj. Between one and two. I shall only just give a law lecture to Jack.

Mrs. Cir. Lord! I wonder Mr. Circuit you would breed that boy up to the bar.

Serj. Why not, chuck? He has fine steady parts, and for his time moots a point—

Mrs. Cir. Steady! stupid you mean: nothing sure cou'd add to his heaviness but the being loaded with law. Why don't you put him into the army?

Serj. Nay, chuck, if you choose it, I believe I have interest to get Jack a commission.

Mrs. Cir. Why, Mr. Circuit, you know he is no son of mine; perhaps a cockade may animate the lad with some fire.

Serj. True, lovee; and a knowledge of the law mayn't be amiss to restrain his fire a little.

Mrs. Cir. I believe there is very little danger of his exceeding in that way.

Serj. Charlotte, send hither your brother.

[Exit Charlotte.]

Mrs. Cir. I'll not interrupt you.

Serj. Far from it, lovee; I should be glad to have you a witness of Jacky's improvement.

Mrs. Cir. Of that I am no judge; besides, I am full of business to-day—There is to be a ballot at one for the *Ladies Club* lately established, and Lady Bab Basto has proposed me for a member.—Pray, my dear, when will you let me have that money to pay my Lord Loo?

Serj. The three hundred you mean?

Mrs. Cir. And besides, there is my debt to Kitty

Cribbage. I protest I almost blush whenever I meet them.

Serj. Why really, lovee, 'tis a large sum of money.—Now, were I worthy to throw in a little advice, we might make a pretty good hand of this business.

Mrs. Cir. I don't understand you.

Serj. Bring an action against them on the statute in the name of my clerk; and so not only rescue the *debt* from their hands, but recover likewise considerable *damages*.

Mrs. Cir. A pretty conceit, Mr. Serjeant! but does it not occur to your wisdom, that as I have (by the help of Captain Dog) been oftener a winner than loser, the tables may be turned upon *us*?

Serj. No, no, chuck, that did not escape me; I have provided for that.—Do you know, by the law, both parties are equally culpable; so that, lovee, we shall be able to fleece your friends not only of what they have *won* of poor dearee, but likewise for what they have *lost*.

Mrs. Cir. Why, what a paltry, pettifogging puppy art thou!—And could you suppose that I would submit to the scandalous office?

Serj. Scandalous! I don't understand this strange perversion of words. The scandal lies in *breaking the laws*, not in bringing the offenders to *justice*.

Mrs. Cir. Mean-spirited wretch!—What, do you suppose that those laws could be levell'd against people of their high rank and condition? Can it be thought that any set of men would submit to lay le-

gal restraints on *themselves*?—Absurd and preposterous!

Serj. Why, by their public practice, my love, one would suspect that they thought themselves excepted by a particular clause.

Mrs. Cir. Oh, to be sure; not the least doubt can be made.

Serj. True, chuck—But then your great friends should never complain of highwaymen stopping their coaches, or thieves breaking into their houses.

Mrs. Cir. Why, what has that to do with the business?

Serj. Oh! the natural consquence, lovee; for whilst the superiors are throwing away their fortunes, and consequently their independence *above*—you can't think but their domestics are following their examples *below*.

Mrs. Cir. Well, and what then?

Serj. Then! the same distress that throws the master and mistress into the power of any who are willing to purchase them, by a regular gradation, seduces the servants to actions, though more *criminal* perhaps not more *atrocious*.

Mrs. Cir. Pshaw! stuff!—I have no need to examine your dirty distinctions—Don't tease me with your jargon—I have told you the sums I shall want, so take care they are ready at your returning from Kingston.—Nay, don't hesitate; recollect your own state of the case, and remember my honour is in pawn, and must some way or other be redeem'd by the end of the week.

[*Exit.*

Serj. (*Solus.*) My honour is in pawn!—Good Lord! how a century will alter the meaning of words!—Formerly, *chastity* was the honour of women, and *good faith* and *integrity* the honour of men: but *now*, a lady who ruins her family by punctually paying her losses at play, and a gentleman who kills his best friend in some trifling frivolous quarrel, are your only tip-toe people of *honour*. Well, let them go on, it brings grist to our mill: for whilst both the sexes stick firm to their *honour*, we shall never want business either at Doctor's Commons or the Old Bailey. [Exit.

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

Enter Serjeant CIRCUIT, and JACK.

Serjeant.

JACK, let Will bring the chaise to the door.

Jack. Mr. Fairplay, Sir, the attorney, begs to speak a few words.

Serj. How often have I told you, that I will see none of these sort of folks but at chambers; you know how angry your mother is at their rapping, and littering the house.

Jack. He says, Sir, he will not detain you five minutes.

Serj. Well, bid him walk in.

Enter FAIRPLAY,

Well, Mr. Fairplay, what's your will?

Fair. I just call'd, Mr. Serjeant, to know your opinion upon the case of young Woodford, and if you like the proposal of being concern'd.

Serj. If it turns out as you state it, and that the father of the lad was really a minor, the Essex estate may without doubt be recover'd; and so may the lands in the North.

Fair. We have full proofs to that fact.

Serj. May be so; but really, Mr. Fairplay, you know the length of time that these kind of suits—

Fair. True, Sir, but then your experience will shorten, I appreh—

Serj. That's more than I know; and then not only my fees lying dormant, but perhaps an expectation of money advanc'd.

Fair. The property, Sir, is of very great value, and, upon the recovery, any acknowledgment shall be readily made.

Serj. There again, *any*! do you know that in law, that the word *any* has no meaning at all? besides, when people are in distress, they are lavish enough of their offers; but when their business is done, then we have nothing but grumbling and grudging.

Fair. You have only to dictate your terms.

Serj. Does the lad live in town?

Fair. He has been under my care since the death of his father. I have given him as good an education as my narrow fortune would let me. He is now studying the law in the Temple, in hopes, that should he fail of other assistance, he may be able one day to do *himself* justice.

Serj. In the Temple?

Fair. Yes, Sir, in those little chambers just over your head—I fancy the young gentleman knows him.

Jack. Who? Mr. Woodford? Lord, as well as myself. He is a sweet sober youth, and will one day make a vast figure, I am sure.

Serj. Indeed!

Jack. I am positive, Sir, if you were to hear him

speak at the Robinhood in the Butcher-row, you would say so yourself. Why, he is now reckon'd the third. Except the breeches-maker from Barbican, and Sawney Sinclair the snuffman, there is not a mortal can touch him.

Serj. Peace, puppy. Well, Mr. Fairplay, leave the papers a little longer with me, and—pray who is employ'd against you?

Fair. A city attorney, one Sheepskin.

Serj. A cunning fellow; I know him. Well, Sir, if you will call at Pump-court in a week.

Fair. I shall attend you.

Serj. Jack, open the door for Mr—[*Exeunt Fair-play and Jack.*] Something may be made of this matter. I'll see this Sheepskin myself. So much in future for carrying on the suit, or so much in hand to make it miscarry. A wise man should well weigh which party to take for.

Enter JACK.

So, Jack, any body at chambers to-day?

Jack. Fieri Facias from Fetter-lane, about the bill to be filed by Kit Crape against Will Vizard this term.

Serj. Praying for an equal partition of plunder?

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Serj. Strange world we live in, that even highwaymen can't be true to each other! (*half aside to himself.*) But we shall make master Vizard refund; we'll show him what long hands the law has.

Jack. Facias says, that in all the books he can't hit a precedent.

Serj. Then I'll make one myself; *aut inveniam, aut faciam*, has been always my motto. The charge must be made for partnership profit, by bartering lead and gun-powder against money, watches, and rings, on Epping-forest, Hounslow-heath, and other parts of the kingdom.

Jack. He says, if the court should get scent of the scheme, the parties would all stand committed.

Serj. Cowardly rascal! but, however, the caution may'nt prove amiss. (*Aside.*) I'll not put my own name to the bill,

Jack. The declaration too is deliver'd in the cause of Roger Rapp'em against Sir Solomon Simple.

Serj. What, the affair of the note?

Jack. Yes.

Serj. Why, he is clear that his client never gave such a note.

Jack. Defendant never saw plaintiff since the hour he was born; but, notwithstanding, they have three witnesses to prove a consideration and signing the note.

Serj. They have.

Jack. He is puzzled what plea to put in.

Serj. Three witnesses ready, you say?

Jack. Yes.

Serj. Tell him Simple must acknowledge the note. (*Jack starts.*) and bid him, against the trial comes on, to procure *four* persons at least to prove the payment at the Crown and Anchor, the 10th of December.

Jack. But then how comes the note to remain in plaintiff's possession?

Serj. Well put, Jack; but we have a *salvo* for that, plaintiff happen'd not to have the note in his pocket, but promis'd to deliver it up when call'd thereunto by defendant.

Jack. That will do rarely.

Serj. Let the defence be a secret; for I see we have able people to deal with. But come, child, not to lose time, have you carefully conn'd those instructions I gave you?

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Serj. Well, that we shall see. How many points are the great object of practice?

Jack. Two.

Serj. Which are they?

Jack. The first is to put a man into possession of what is his right.

Serj. The second?

Jack. Either to deprive a man of what is *really* his right, or to keep him as long as possible *out* of possession.

Serj. Good boy! To gain the last end, what are the best means to be us'd?

Jack. Various and many are the legal modes of delay.

Serj. Name them.

Jack. Injunctions, demurrers, sham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, rebutters, sur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, essoigns, and imparlance.

Serj. (to himself.) Fine instruments in the hands of a man who knows how to use them.—But now,

Jack, we come to the point: If an able advocate has his choice in a cause (which if he is in reputation he may readily have), which side should he choose, the right or the wrong?

Jack. A great lawyer's business is always to make choice of the wrong.

Serj. And prithce why so?

Jack. Because a good cause can speak for itself, whilst a bad one demands an able counsellor to give it a colour.

Serj. Very well. But in what respects will this answer to the lawyer himself?

Jack. In a twofold way. Firstly, his fees will be large in proportion to the dirty work he is to do.

Serj. Secondly?

Jack. His reputation will rise, by obtaining the victory in a desperate cause.

Serj. Right, boy.—Are you ready in the case of the cow?

Jack. Pretty well, I believe.

Serj. Give it then.

Jack. First of April, anno seventeen hundred and blank, John a Noakes was indicted by blank, before blank, in the county of blank, for stealing a cow, contra pacem, etcet.—And against the statute in that case provided and made, to prevent stealing of cattle.

Serj. Go on.

Jack. Said Nokes was convicted upon the said statute.

Serj. What follow'd upon?——

Jack. Motion in arrest of judgment made by counsellor Puzzle. First, Because the field from whence the cow was convey'd is laid in the indictment as round, but turn'd out upon proof to be square.

Serj. That's well : a valid objection.

Jack. Secondly, Because in said indictment the colour of the cow is called red, there being no such things, in rerum natura, as red cows, no more than black lions, spread eagles, flying griffins, or blue boars.

Serj. Well put.

Jack. Thirdly, Said Nokes has not offended against form of the statute ; because stealing of cattle is there provided against : whereas we are only convicted of stealing a cow. Now, though cattle may be cows, yet it does by no means follow that cows must be cattle.

Serj. Bravo, bravo ! buss me, you rogue ; you are your father's own son ! go on and prosper.—I am sorry, dear Jack, I must leave thee. If Providence But sends thee life and health, I prophecy thou wilt wrest as much land from the owners, and save as many thieves from the gallows, as any practitioner since the days of king Alfred.

Jack. I'll do my endeavour. (*Exit Serjeant.*) So ! —father is set off. Now if I can but lay eyes on our Charlotte, just to deliver this letter, before Madam comes home. There she is.—Hist, siter Charlotte !

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. What have you got there, Jack ?

Jack. Something for you, sister.

Char. For me! Prithce what is it?

Jack. A thing.

Char. What thing?

Jack. A thing that will please you I'm sure.

Char. Come, don't be a boy, let me have it. (*Jack gives the letter.*) How's this! a letter! from whom?

Jack. Can't you guess?

Char. Not I; I don't know the hand.

Jack. May be not; but you know the inditer.

Char. Then tell me his name.

Jack. Break open the seal, and you'll find it.

Char. (*Opening the letter.*) "Charles Woodford?"
—I am sure I know nothing of him.

Jack. Ay, but sister you do.

Char. How! when, and where?

Jack. Don't you remember about three weeks ago, when you drank tea at our chambers, there was a young gentleman in a blue sattin waistcoat, who wore his own head of hair?

Char. Well?

Jack. That letter's from he.

Char. What can be his business with me?

Jack. Read that, and you'll know.

Char. (*Reads.*) "Want words to apologize—hum, "hum—very first moment I saw you—hum, hum—"smother'd long in my breast—hum, hum—happy, or else the most wretched of men."—So, Sir, you have undertaken a pretty commission! and what do you think my father will—"

Jack. Why, I hope you won't go for to tell him.

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I shall.

Jack. No, sister, I'm sure you won't be so cross. Besides, what could I do? The poor young lad begg'd so hard; and there for this fortnight he has gone about sighing, and musing, and moping: I am satisfied it would melt you to see him. Do, sister, let me bring him this evening, now father is out.

Char. Upon my word!—The young man has made no bad choice of an agent: you are for pushing matters at once.—But, harkee, Sir, who is the spark you are so anxious about? and how long have you known him?

Jack. Oh! a prodigious long while: above a month I am certain. Don't you think him mighty genteel? I assure you he is vastly lik'd by the ladies.

Char. He is!

Jack. Yes, indeed. Mrs. Congo, at the Grecian coffee-house, says he's the soberest youth that comes to the house; and all Mrs. Mittens's 'prentices throw down their work, and run to the window every time he goes by.

Char. Upon my word!

Jack. And moreover, besides that, he has several great estates in the country; but only, for the present, he is kept out of 'em all by the owners.

Char. Ah! Jack, that's the worst part of the story.

Jack. Pshaw! that's nothing at all. His guardian, Mr. Fairplay, has been with father to-day, and says he is certain that he can set all to rights in a trice.

Char. Well, Jack, when that point is determin'd, it will be time enough to——

Jack. Then, Lord of mercy! why, sister Charlotte, it is my private opinion, that if you don't give him some crumbs of comfort he won't live till Midsummer term.

Char. I warrant you. Either Cupid's darts were always but poetical engines, or they have been lately depriv'd of their points. Love holds no place in the modern bills of mortality. However, Jack, you may tell your friend that I have observ'd his frequent walks in our street.

Jack. Walks! Why, one should think he was appointed to relieve the old watchman; for no sooner one is *off* but the other comes *on*.

Char. And that from his eyes being constantly fixed on my window (for the information of which I presume he is indebted to you)——

Jack. He! he! he!

Char. I had a pretty shrewd guess at his business; but tell him, that unless my fa—Hush! cur^t tyrant is return'd. Don't leave the house till I see you.

Enter Mrs. CIRCUIT and BETTY.

Mrs. Cir. So, Sir, what makes you loitering from chambers? I thought I told you, you should never be here but at meals? (*Exit Jack.*) One spy is enough in a family.—Miss, you may go to your room; and, d'ye hear—I shall have company, so you need not come down. (*Exit Charlotte.*)—Betty, no message or letter.

Betty. None, madam.

Mrs. Cir. That is amazing!—You know I expect Colonel Secret and Mrs. Simper every instant.

Betty. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Cir. Put the fruit and the wine on the table in the next room.

Betty. Very well, madam.

Mrs. Cir. And, Betty, order the fellow to let nobody in but Sir Luke.

Betty. Madam, I shall take care. [Exit.

Mrs. Cir. (*sits down.*) The ballot must be over by this time. Sure there is nothing so dreadful as a state of suspense: but should they black-ball me!—No, there's no danger of that: Miss Mattadore has insur'd me success.—Well, this is certainly one of the most useful institutions; it positively supplies the only point of time one does not know how to employ. From twelve, the hour of one's rising, to dinner, is a most horrible chasm; for though teasing the mercers and milliners, by tumbling their wares, is now and then an entertaining amusement, yet, upon repetition, it palls.—But every morning to be sure of a party, and then again at night, after a rout, to have a place to retire to; to be quite freed from all pain of providing; not to be pester'd at table with the odious company of clients and country cousins; for I am determin'd to dine and sup at the club every day. I can tell 'em they'll have but very few forfeits from me.

Enter BETTY, in haste, with a letter.

Betty. By a chairman, madam, from the Thatch'd House.

Mrs. Cir. Give it me, Betty, this instant.—Ay—this is Mattadore's hand. (*opens and reads the letter.*)

“ My dear Circuit—it is with the utmost concern
“ and confusion I find myself oblig'd to acquaint
“ you, that notwithstanding all the pains I have
“ taken, the club have thought fit to reject”—Oh!
(*she faints.*)

Betty. Bless my soul! my lady is gone!—John! Will! Kitty! run hither this instant.—

Enter two MAIDS and a MAN SERVANT.

All. What, what's the matter?

Betty. Quick! quick! some hartshorn and water.
(*pats her hand.*) Madam! madam—

Serv. Here! here! here! (*bringing water.*)

Betty. John, go for the potter-carrier this instant—I believe to my soul she is dead—Kitty, fetch some feathers to burn under her nose.—There, stand further off, and give her some air—

Enter Sir LUKE.

Sir Luke. Hey day! what the deuse is the matter? What's the meaning of all this, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. Oh, Sir! is it you—my poor lady! (*cries.*) Clap the bottle hard to her nose.

Sir Luke. But how came it about?

Betty. Some of the *continents* of that cursed letter she has there in her hand.

Sir Luke. Here, here, take some of my *eu de luce*.
(*offering a bottle.*)

Betty. There! she recovers a little—some water—I believe it is nothing but a *satirical* fit; I have had them myself—Now she opens her eyes—so, so—bend her forward a little.

Sir Luke. My sweet Mrs. Circuit!

Mrs. Cir. Who is that?

Betty. Nobody at all, madam, but only Sir Luke.

Mrs. Cir. Oh, Sir Luke, such a stroke, so fatal, so sudden! it is not in nature I should ever survive it.

Sir Luke. Marry, heaven forbid! But what cause—what could—

Mrs. Cir. Leave the room. (*To the servants, who go out.*) Only look over that letter.

Sir Luke. Hum, hum,—(*reads.*) “fit to reject you—this—

Mrs. Cir. There! there! there!

Sir Luke. I own this is the utmost malice of fortune—but let me finish the letter.—“This calamity, “dear Circuit, is of such a nature as baffles all advice or interposition of friends: I shall therefore “leave you to time and your own good understanding.” (*pretty and sensible.*)—“Yours,” &c.—But let us see, what says the postscript? (*reads.*) “Perhaps it may give you some comfort to know that “you had sixteen almonds, and but two raisins “against you.”

Mrs. Cir. But two!

Sir Luke. No more.

Mrs. Cir. This must be Kitty Cribbage's doing; she has been tattling about the paltry trifle I owe her.

Sir Luke. Not unlikely: but come, bear up, my dear Madam, and consider that *two*——

Mrs. Cir. Is as bad as two thousand.

Sir Luke. Granted; but perhaps it may not be too late to repair.—Gadso! I have thought of a scheme—I'll be elected myself, and then I warrant we manage——

Mrs. Cir. You, Sir Luke? that never can be.

Sir Luke. No, Madam; and why not?—Why you don't suppose that they wou'd venture to——

Mrs. Cir. It would not only be against the spirit, but the very letter of their constitution, to choose you a member.

Sir Luke. Ay, Madam, how so!

Mrs. Cir. Their statutes are selected from all the codes that ever existed from the days of Lycurgus to the present Czarina.

Sir Luke. Well.

Mrs. Cir. The law that relates to your case they have borrow'd from the Roman religion.

Sir Luke. As how?

Mrs. Cir. As no man can be admitted a monk who has the least corporeal spot or defect; so no candidate can be receiv'd as a member who is depriv'd of the use of any one of his limbs.

Sir Luke. Nay, then indeed I am clearly cut out; that incapacity can never be got over.

Mrs. Cir. Indeed, the Serjeant says, if the club could be indue'd to *resolve* in your favour, then the *original law* would signify nothing.

Sir Luke. Well, well, we'll see what can be done. (*A loud knocking.*) But hush! the company's come; collect yourself, sweet Mrs. Circuit; don't give your enemies the malicious pleasure of seeing how this disappointment affects you.

Mrs. Cir. Never fear; I know a little too much of the world not to turn this defeat to my credit.

Enter Colonel SECRET and Mrs. SIMPER.

Mrs. Sim. Your servant, Sir Luke. My dear Circuit, I am frighten'd to death—your people tell me you are but just recover'd from a——

Mrs. Cir. Oh! nothing at all! a faintness, a kind of swimming—but those people are ever swelling mole-hills to mountains

Mrs. Sim. I protest I was afraid that you had suffer'd your late disappointment to lay hold of your spirits.

Mrs. Cir. What disappointment, my dear?

Col. Mrs. Simper hints at the little mistake made this morning at the Thatch'd House.

Mrs. Cir. That! ridiculous! I could have told you that a fortnight ago, child—all my own doing.

Mrs. Sim. How!

Sir Luke. Entirely.

Mrs. Cir. Oh! I always detested the thoughts of the thing—They would put me up; let me say what

I would, so I was reduc'd to the necessity of prevailing upon two of my friends to *black-ball* me.

Mrs. Sim. That, indeed, alters the case.

Col. I am vastly happy to hear it; your old acquaintances were afraid they should lose you.

Mrs. Cir. It is a sign they know but little of me—
But come, my good folks, I have prepar'd a small collation in the next room, will you— [Exeunt.

Enter JACK and WOODFORD.

Jack. I'll watch sister, to see that nobody comes. Now, Woodford, make good use of your time. (*Exit Woodford.*) There, I have left 'em together; if I had staid, I don't believe they would have open'd their mouths for a month: I never saw such an alteration in a lad since the day I was born.—Why, if I had not known him before, I should not have thought he had a word to throw to a dog; but I remember the old proverb,

True lovers are shy

When people are by.

I'll take a peep to see how they go on:—There they are, just in the same posture I left them; she folding her fingers, and he twirling his hat.—Why, they don't even look at each other.—Was there ever such a couple of—Stay, stay, now he opens his mouth—pshaw!—Lord! there he shuts it again—hush! I hear somebody coming—no—nothing at all:—Mother is safe I am sure,—there is no danger from her—Now let us take t'other—(*Peeps at the door.*) Hum!—gadso, matters are mightily mend-

ed—There, there! very well—there he lays down the law—Now he claps his hand on his heart—vastly pretty, I vow—There he swoops with both his knees on the ground—Charming!—And squeezes his hat with both hands like one of the actors—Delightful! She wants him to rise, and he won't—Prodigious moving indeed!

Enter BETTY.

Betty. So, Sir, what are you doing there?

Jack. There! where?

Betty. With your eyes glew'd close to the key-hole.

Jack. I wanted to speak a word to my sister.

Betty. Then why don't you open her door?

Jack. I did not know but she might be saying her prayers.

Betty. Prayers! a likely story! Who says their prayers at this time of the day?—No, no, that won't pass upon me.—Let me look—Very pretty! So, so, I see there's somebody else at his prayers too—fine doings!—As soon as the company goes, I shall take care to inform Madam your mother.

Jack. Nay, but Mrs. Betty, you won't be so—

Betty. Indeed, Mr John, but I shall—I'll swallow none of your secrets, believe me.

Jack. What, perhaps your stomach is overloaded already.

Betty. No matter for that, I shall be even with Miss for telling Master about and concerning my drums.

Jack. Why, Mrs. Betty, surely sister could not—

Betty. When she very well knows that I have not sent cards but twice the whole season.

Jack. Lord! what signi—

Betty. What would she say, if she visited the great families I do? For tho' I am, as I may say, but a commoner, no private gentlewoman's gentlewoman has a more prettier set of acquaintance.

Jack. Well, but——

Betty. My routs indeed!—There is Mrs. Allspice, who lives with Lady Cicily Sequence, has six tables every Sunday, besides looers, and braggers; and moreover proposes giving a masquerade the beginning of June, and I intends being there.

Jack. Well, but to talk calmly.

Betty. And as Miss is so fond of fetching and carrying, you may tell her we are to have a private play among ourselves, as the quality have: the *Dis-trustful Mother*, 'tis called—*Pylades*, by Mr. Thomas, Lord *Catastrophe's* butler—*Hermione*, Mrs. Allspice; and I shall do *Andromache* myself.

Jack. A play! Lord, Mrs. Betty, will you give me a ticket?

Betty. All's one for that—and so you may tell Miss that. (*Bell rings.*) Coming, Madam, this minute—And that, Mr. John, is the long and the short on't. (*Bell rings again.*) Lord, I am coming—

[*Exit.*

Enter WOODFORD to JACK.

Wood. What's the matter?

Jack. Here, Betty, my mother's fac-totum, has just discover'd your haunts, and is gone to lay an information against you—so, depend, upon it, a search-warrant will issue directly.

Wood. Stay but a moment till I take leave of your sister.

Jack. Zooks! I tell you the constables will be here in a trice, so you have not a moment to lose.

Wood. How unlucky this is!

Jack. But I hope you have obtained a verdict, however.

Wood. No.

Jack. No!

Wood. It would not have been decent to have press'd the judge too soon for a sentence.

Jack. Soon!—You are a ninny, I tell you so:—Here you will suffer judgment to go by default.—You are a pretty practitioner indeed!

Wood. This, you may know, my dear Jack, is an equity case: I have but just fil'd my bill; one must give the parties time to put in an answer.

Jack. Time!—How you may come off in court I can't tell, but you will turn out but a poor chamber-counsel I fear.—Well, come along, perhaps I may be able to procure another hearing before it is.—But, Lord o'mercy! there is father crossing the hall—should he see us, all's over—we have nothing for't but taking shelter with sister. [Exeunt.

THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

Sir Luke Limp, Mrs. Circuit, Colonel Secret, and Mrs. Simper, discover'd at a table, with a Collation before them.

Mrs. Circuit.

OH? by-the-by, Sir Luke—Take some of these sweetmeats, my dear (*To Mrs. Simper.*)—Did not you promise to introduce to me that little agreeable piece of imperfection that belongs to the opera?—Colonel, won't you taste the champaign?

Sir Luke. Who, Signior Piano?—Let me assist Mrs. Simper.—Why, Madam, I made an attempt; but at present—shan't I send you a biscuit?—he is in the possession of a certain lady, who never suffers him out of her sight for a moment.

Mrs. Sim. Oh! the curmudgeon!—I am vastly fond of these custards.

Sir Luke. Yes, they have a delicate flavour—but he promis'd, if possible, to escape for an hour—won't you? (*To Mrs. Circuit.*)

Mrs. Cir. No, it gives me the heart-burn.—Then let us leave him a cover.

Col. By all means in the world.

Mrs. Cir. But there is, likewise, another party, for whom a place ought to be kept.

Mrs. Sim. Another; Who can that be I wonder?

Mrs. Cir. A small appendix of mine.

Sir Luke. How, Madam !

Mrs. Cir. You need not be jealous, Sir Luke—Taste that tart, Mrs. Simper.—It is only my husband the Serjeant.—Ha, ha, ha !—Betty makes them herself.

Mrs. Sim. Oh! you abominable creature! how could such a thought come into your head?

Sir Luke. Ma'am—(*Offering sweetmeats to Mrs. Simper.*)

Mrs. Sim. Not a bit more, I thank you.—I swear and vow I should swoon at the sight.

Mrs. Cir. And I should receive him with the polite indifference of an absolute stranger.

Sir Luke. Well said, my good Lady Intrepid! But, notwithstanding, I would venture a trifle that his appearance would give you such an electrical shock——

Mrs. Cir. You are vastly deceiv'd.

Sir Luke. Dare you come to the proof? Will you give me leave to introduce Mr. Serjeant? He is not far off.

Mrs. Cir. What, my husband?

Sir Luke. Even he! I saw him as I enter'd the hall.

Mrs. Cir. Impossible!

Sir Luke. Nay, then I must fetch him.

[*Exit Sir Luke.*]

Col. I can't conceive what the knight wou'd be at.

Mrs. Sim. Why he is mad.

Mrs. Cir. Or turn'd fool.

Enter Sir LUKE, with the Serjeant's peruke on a block.

Sir Luke. Now, Madam, have I reason? Is this your husband or not?

Mrs. Sim. It is he; not the least doubt can be made.

Col. Yes, yes, it is the Serjeant himself.

Mrs. Cir. I own it; I acknowledge the lord of my wishes. *[Kisses the block.]*

Mrs. Sim. All his features are there!

Col. The grave cast of his countenance!

Sir Luke. The vacant stare of his eye!

Mrs. Cir. The livid hue of his lips!

Mrs. Sim. The rubies with which his cheeks are enrich'd.

Col. The silent solemnity when he sits on the bench!

Mrs. Cir. We must have him at table; but pray, good folks, let my husband appear like himself.—
I'll run for the gown. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. Sim. By all means in the world.

Sir Luke. Dispatch, I beseech you.

Mrs. CIRCUIT returns with a gown and band.

Mrs. Cir. Sir Luke, lend your assistance.

Col. There, place him at the head of the table.

(They fix the head at the back of a chair, and place it at table; then all sit.)

Mrs. Sim. Madam, you'll take care of your husband.

Mrs. Cir. I don't want to be put in mind of my duty.

Mrs. Sim. Oh, Madam! I know that very well.

Sir Luke. Come, Hob or Nob, Master Circuit—let us try if we can't fuddle the Serjeant.

Col. O! fye! have a proper respect for the coif.

Mrs. Sim. Don't be too facetious, Sir Luke: it is not quite so safe to sport with the heads of the law; you don't know how soon you may have a little business together.

Sir Luke. But come, the Serjeant is sulky.—I have thought of a way to divert him:—You know he is never so happy as when he is hearing a cause: suppose we were to plead one before him; Mrs. Circuit and I to be counsel, the Colonel the clerk, and Mrs. Simper the cryer.

Mrs. Cir. The finest thought in the world! And, stay, to conduct the trial with proper solemnity, let's rummage his wardrobe; we shall there be able to equip ourselves with suitable dresses.

Sir Luke. Alons! alons!

Mrs. Sim. There is no time to be lost. (*All rise.*

Mrs. Cir. (*Stopping short as they are going out.*) But won't my husband be angry if we leave him alone? Bye dearee—we shall soon return to thee again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Serjeant CIRCUIT, not perceiving the Collation

Serj. So, my lord not being able to sit, there was no occasion for me.—I can't put that girl's nonsense out of my head—My wife is young to be sure, and

loves pleasure I own ; but as to the *main* article I have not the least ground to suspect her in that—No, no!—And then, Sir Luke? my *prossen ami*, the dearest friend I have in the—Heyday! (*Seeing the collation.*) What the deuse have we here?—A collation!—So, so—I see Madam knows how to divert herself during my absence. What's this? (*Seeing the block.*) Oh, ho! ha! ha! ha!—Well, that's pretty enough, I protest.—Poor girl, I see she could not be happy without having something at table that resembled me.—How pleas'd she will be to find me here in *propria persona*.—By your leave, Mrs. Circuit—(*Sits down and eats.*) Delicate eating, in troth—and the wine (*Drinks.*)—Champaign as I live—must have t'other glass—They little think how that gentleman there regales himself in their absence—Ha! ha! ha!—quite convenient, I vow—the heat of the weather has made me—Come, brother Coif, here's your health—(*Drinks.*)—I must pledge myself I believe—(*Drinks again.*)—devilish strong—pshut!—Somebody's coming—(*Gets up, and goes towards the wings.*)—What do I see? Four lawyers! What the devil can be the meaning of this? I should be glad to get at the bottom of—Hey! By your leave, brother Serjeant—I must crave the use of your robe—(*Sits down, and gets under the gown*)—Between ourselves, this is not the first time this gown has cover'd a fraud.

Enter Sir LUKE, COLONEL, Mrs. CIRCUIT, and Mrs. SIMPER, dressed as Counsellors.

Sir Luke. Come, come, gentlemen, dispatch, the court has been waiting some time. Brother Circuit, you have look'd over your brief?

Mrs. Cir. What, do you suppose, Sir, that like some of our brethren I defer that till I come into court? No, no.

Sir Luke. This cause contains the whole marrow and pith of all modern practice.

Mrs. Cir. One should think, Sir Luke, you had been bred to the bar.

Sir Luke. Child, I was some years in the temple; but the death of my brother robb'd the robe of my labours.

Mrs. Sim. What a loss to the public!

Sir Luke. You are smart, Mrs. Simper. I can tell you, Serjeant Snuffle, whose manner I study'd pronounc'd me a promising youth.

Mrs. Simper. I don't doubt it.

Sir Luke. But let us to business. And, first, for the state of the case: The parties you know are Hobson and Nobson; the object of litigation is a small parcel of land, which is to decide the fate of a borough.

Mrs. Cir. True; call'd Turnbury Mead.

Sir Luke. Very well. Then to bring matters to a short issue, it was agreed, that Nobson should on the premises cut down a tree, and Hobson bring his action of damage.

Mrs. Cir. True, true.

Sir Luke. The jury being sworn, and the counsellors feed, the court may proceed.—Take your seats—But bold—I hope no gentleman has been touch'd on both sides.

All. Oh! fye!

Sir Luke. Let silence be call'd.

Mrs. Sim. Silence in the court!

Sir Luke. But stop. To be regular, and provide for fresh causes, we must take no notice of the borough and lands, the real objects in view, but stick fast to the tree, which is of no importance at all.

All. True, true.

Sir Luke. Brother Circuit, you may proceed.

Mrs. Cir. Gentlemen of the jury.—I am in this cause counsel for Hobson the plaintiff.—The action is brought against Nebuchadnezzar Nobson, That he the said Nobson did cut down a tree, value twopence, and to his own use said tree did convert.—Nobson justifies, and claims tree as his tree. We will, gentlemen, first state the probable evidence, and then come to the positive: and, first, as to the probable.—When was this tree here belonging to Hobson, and claim'd by Nobson, cut down? Was it cut down publicly in the day, in the face of the sun, men, women, and children, all the world looking on?—No; it was cut down privately, in the night, in a dark night, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see.—Hum—And then with respect and regard to this tree, I am instructed to say, gentlemen, it was a beautiful, an ornamental tree to the spot

where it grew. Now can it be thought that any man would come for to go in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree, which tree was an ornamental tree, if tree had been his tree?—Certainly no.—And again, gentlemen, we moreover insist, this tree was not only ornamental to the spot where it grew, but it was a useful tree to the owner: it was a plum-tree, not only a plum tree, but I am authoriz'd to say the best of plum-trees, it was a damsin plum.—Now can it be thought, that any man wou'd come for to go, in the iniddle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree; which tree was not only an ornamental tree, but a useful tree; and not only a useful tree, but a plum-tree; and not only a plum-tree, but the best of plum-trees, a damsin-plum? Most assuredly no.—If so be then that this be so, and so it most certainly is, I apprehend no doubt will remain with the court, but my client a verdict will have, with full costs of suit, in such a manner, and so forth, as may nevertheless appear notwithstanding.

Sir Luke. Have you done, Mr. Serjeant?

Mrs. Cir. You may proceed.

Sir Luke. Gentlemen of the jury—I am in this cause counsel for Hob—Zouns! I think the head moves.

All. Hey!

Col. No, no, Mrs. Simper jogg'd the chair with her foot, that was all.

Sir Luke. For Hercules Hobson—(I cou'd have

sworn it had stirr'd)—I shan't, gentlemen, upon this occasion, attempt to move your passions, by flowing periods and rhetorical flowers, as Mr. Serjeant has done; no, gentlemen, if I get at your hearts, I will make my way through your heads, however thick they may be.—In order to which, I will pursue the learned gentleman thro' what he calls his probable proofs: and, first, as to this tree's being cut down in the night; in part we will grant him that point, but, under favour, not a dark night, Mr. Serjeant; no, quite the reverse, we can prove that the moon shone bright, with uncommon lustre that night—So that if so be as how people did not see that was none—(*Serjeant sneezes.*) Nay, Mrs. Circuit, if you break the thread of my—

Mrs. Cir. Me break!—I said nothing I'm sure.

Sir Luke. That's true, but you sneez'd.

Mrs. Cir. Not I.

Sir Luke. I am sure somebody did; it could no be the head—consider the least interruption puts one out of one's—None of our faults, they might have look'd on and seen if they would. And then as to this beautiful tree, with which Mr. Serjeant has ornamented his spot. No, gentlemen, no such matter at all; I am instructed to say quite the reverse: a stunted tree, a blighted, blasted tree; a tree not only limbless, and leafless, but very near lifeless; that was the true state of the tree; and then as to its use, we own it was a plum-tree indeed, but not of the kind Mr. Serjeant sets forth, a damsin plum; our proofs say loudly a bull plum; but if so be and

it had been a damson plum, will any man go for to say, that a damson plum is the best kind of plum? not a whit. I take upon me to say it is not a noun substantive plum—with plenty of sugar it does pretty well indeed in a tart; but to eat it by itself, will Mr. Serjeant go to compare it with the queen-mother, the padrigons—

Serj. (*Appearing suddenly from under the gown.*)
The green gages, or the orlines.

Mrs. Cir. As I live 'tis my husband!

Ser. Nay, Sir Luke, don't you run away too—give me a buss—since I was born, I never heard a finer reply; I am sorry I did not hear your argument out—but I could not resist.

Sir Luke. This I own was a little surprise—Had you been long here, Mr. Serjeant?

Serj. But the instant you enter'd.

Sir Luke. So, then all is safe.

[*Aside.*

Serj. But come, won't you refresh you, Sir Luke—you have had hard duty to-day.

Sir Luke. I drank very freely at table.

Serj. Nay, for the matter of that, I han't been idle; (*both drink.*) But come, throw off your gown, and let us finish the bottle: I han't had such a mind to be merry I can't tell the day when.

Sir Luke. Nay then, Mr. Serjeant, have at you—Come, here's long life and health to the law.

(*Drinks.*

Serj. I'll pledge that toast in a bumper.—(*Drinks.*)—I'll take Charlotte's hint, and see if I can't draw the truth out of the knight by a bottle.

[*Aside.*

Sir Luke. I'll try if I can't fuddle the fool, and get rid of him that way. [Aside.]

Serj. I could not have thought it: why, where the deuce did you pick up all this? But by-the-by, pray who was the cryer?

Sir Luke. Did not you know her? Mrs. Simper, your neighbour.

Serj. A pestilent jade! she's a good one, I warrant.

Sir Luke. She is thought very pretty: what say you to a glass in her favour?

Serj. By all means in the world! (*they drink.*) And that spark the clerk?

Sir Luke. Colonel Secret, a friend to the lady you toasted.

Serj. A friend! oh, ay—I understand you—Come, let us join 'em together.

Sir Luke. Alons. (*Drink.*) Egad, I shall be caught in my own trap, I begin to feel myself fluster'd already. [Aside.]

Serj. Delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better every glass. (*Sings.*)

Drink and drive care away,

Drink and be merry.

Sir Luke. True, my dear Serjeant—this is the searcher of secrets—the only key to the heart.

Serj. Right boy, in veritas vino.

Sir Luke. No deceit in a bumper. (*Sings.*) Drink and be merry.

Serj. Merry! dammee, what a sweet fellow you are, what would I give to be half so jolly and gay.

Sir Luke. (*appearing very drunk.*) Would you? and yet do you know, Serjeant, that at this very juncture of time, there is a thing has popp'd into my head, that distresses me very much.

Serj. Then drive it out with a bumper (*Drink.*) Well, how is it now?

Sir Luke. Now!—the matter is not mended at all.

Serj. What the deuse is the business that so sticks in your stomach?

Sir Luke. You know, my dear Serjeant, I am your friend, your real, your affectionate friend.

Serj. I believe it, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. And yet, for these six months I have conceal'd a secret, that touches you near, very near—

Serj. Me near! That was wrong, very wrong? friends should have all things in common.

Sir Luke. That's what I said to myself; Sir Luke, says I, open your heart to your friend. But to tell you the truth, what sealed up my lips, was the fear that this secret should make you sulky and sad.

Serj. Me sulky and sad! ha! ha! how little you know of me.

Sir Luke. Swear then thou won't be uneasy.

Serj. Well, I do.

Sir Luke. (*Rising.*) Soft! let us see that all's safe. Well, Mr. Serjeant, do you know that you are—a fine, honest fellow.

Serj. Is that such a secret?

Sir Luke. Be quiet; a damn'd honest fellow—but as to your wife—

Serj. Well?

Sir Luke. She is an infamous strum—

Serj. How! it is a falsehood Sir Luke, my wife is as virtuous a wom—

Sir Luke. Oh! if you are angry, your servant—I thought that the news would have pleas'd you—for after all, what is the business to me? What do I get by the bargain?

Serj. That's true; but then would it not vex any man to hear his wife abus'd in such a—

Sir Luke. Not if its true, you old fool.

Serj. I say it is false: prove it; give me that satisfaction, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Oh! you shall have that pleasure directly; and to come at once to the point—you remember last New-year's day how severely it froze.

Serj. I do recollect.

Sir Luke. Very well; we are all invited to dine at Alderman Inkle's.

Serj. Very right.

Sir Luke. Well, and I did not go: Mrs. Circuit made me dine here in this house—Was it my fault?

Serj. No, no, Sir Luke, no.

Sir Luke. At table says she—she said, I was the picture of you—Was it my fault?

Serj. Well, and suppose you are; where's the mischief in that?

Sir Luke. Be quiet, I tell you.—Then throwing her arms round my neck,—it is my husband himself I embrace, it is my little old man that I kiss!—for she has a prodigious affection for you at bottom—Was it my fault?

Serj. But what is there serious in this? dost think I mind such trifles?

Sir Luke. Hold your tongue, you fool, for a moment—Then throwing her *teresa* aside—upon my soul she is prodigious fine every where here—Was it my fault?

Serj. My fault! my fault! I see no fault in all this.

Sir Luke. (*Hatching a cry.*) No! why then, my dear friend, do you know that I was so unworthy, so profligate, so abandon'd—as to—(*Rises.*) say no more, the business is done.

Serj. Ay, indeed!

Sir Luke. Oh! fact! there is not the least doubt of the matter; this is no *hear-say*, dy'e see, I was by all the while.

Serj. Very pretty! very fine upon my word.

Sir Luke. Was it my fault? what cou'd I do? put yourself in my place; I must have been more or less than man to resist.

Serj. Your fault, Sir Luke, no, no—you did but your duty—But as to my wife—

Sir Luke. She's a diabolical fiend; I shall hate her as long as I live.

Serj. And I too.

Sir Luke. Only think of her forcing me, as it were with a sword at my breast, to play such a trick; you, my dear Serjeant, the best, truest friend I have in the world. [*Weeps.*]

Serj. (*Weeping.*) Dry your tears, dear Sir Luke; I shall ever gratefully acknowledge your confidence

T H E L Y A R.

A F A R C E,

IN THREE ACTS.

WRITTEN BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAY-MARKET.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,

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1794.

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THE LYAR.

THIS entertaining production of the late Samuel Foote, as we are informed, was originally intended for the Hay-market Little Theatre; the profits of which were then shared between the Author and Mr. Murphy. But, under such directors, the Temple of Momus experienced a run of success, which continued throughout the season (1761) for which the Lyar was intended, and this good fortune rendered unnecessary any addition to the list of novelties.

On the following Winter, it was played for the first time on the boards of Covent Garden; but although Foote represented his own hero, it did not meet with so brilliant a reception as its merits entitled it to. This may be attributed to a disappointment in public expectation, and not to any fault in the piece itself. Its title was attractive, the town imagined the Wit had prepared his shaft for a partial mark, many a critic in the pit had formed his own object, and, before the drawing up of the curtain, the prevailing whisper was "Who can he mean?" Conjecture was entirely at an end at the close of the first act; and the spectators, who came prepared to see FOOTE, was not so well pleased as they otherwise would have been with his "Cap to fit many heads," but which they had imagined was intended, only for ONE.

This supposition is strengthened by the full houses it has since drawn. Indeed such acting as Palmer displays in Young Wilding may justify us in saying, that part of its popularity may be attributed to the exertions of that excellent comedian.

Dramatis Personae.

HAY-MARKET.

Men.

Sir James Elliot,	-	MR. R. PALMER
Old Wilding,	-	MR. J. AIKEN
Young Wilding,	-	MR. PALMER
Papillion,	-	MR. BURTON.

Women.

Miss Grantham,	-	MRS. GOODALL
Miss Godfrey,	-	MRS. BROOKE
Kitty,	-	MISS BARNES.

PROLOGUE.

WHAT various revolutions in our art,
Since Thespis first sold ballads in a cart!
By nature fram'd the witty war to wage,
And lay the deep foundations of the stage,
From his own soil that bard his pictures drew:
The gaping crowd the mimic features knew,
And the broad jest with fire electric flew.
Succeeding times, more polish'd and refin'd,
To rigid rules the comic muse confin'd.
Robb'd of the nat'ral freedom of her song,
In artful measures now she floats along.
No sprightly sallies rouse the slumb'ring pit:
Thalia, grown mere architect in wit,
To doors and ladders has confin'd her cares,
Convenient closets, and a snug back-stairs;
'Twixt her and Satire has dissolv'd the league,
And jilted Humour to enjoy Intrigue.
To gain the suff'rage of this polish'd age,
We bring to-night a stranger on the stage:
His sire De Vega, we confess this truth,
Lest you mistake him for a British youth.
Severe the censure on my feeble pen,
Neglecting manners, that she copies men,
Thus, if I hum or ha, or name report,
'Tis Serjeant Splitcause from the Inns of Court;

If at the age that ladies cease to dance,
To romp at Ranelagh, or read romance,
I draw a dowager inclin'd to man,
Or paint her rage for china or japan,
The true original is quickly known,
And Lady Squab proclaim'd throughout the town.
But in the following group let no man dare
To claim a limb, nay, not a single hair :
What gallant Briton can be such a sot
To own the child a Spaniard has begot ?



THE LYAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Young Wilding's Lodgings.*

YOUNG WILDING and PAPILLION *discovered.*

Young Wilding.

AND am I now, Papillion, perfectly equipp'd ?

Pap. Personne mieux. Nobody better.

Y. Wild. My figure ?

Pap. Fait a peindre.

Y. Wild. My air ?

Pap. Libre.

Y. Wild. My address ?

Pap. Parisiene.

Y. Wild. My hat sits easily under my arm ; not like the draggled tail of my tatter'd academical habit.

Pap. Ah, bien autre chose.

Y. Wild. Why, then, adieu Alma Mater, and bien venue la ville de Londre ; farewell to the schools,

and welcome the theatres; presidents, proctors, short commons with long graces, must now give place to plays, bagnios, long tavern-bills with no graces at all.

Pap. Ah, bravo, bravo!

Y. Wild. Well, but my dear Papillion, you must give me the chart du paye. This town is a new world to me; my provident papa, you know, would never suffer me near the smoke of London; and what can be his motive for permitting me now, I can't readily conceive.

Pap. Ni moi.

Y. Wild. I shall, however, take the liberty to conceal my arrival from him for a few days.

Pap. Vous avez raison.

Y. Wild. Well, my Mentor, and how am I to manage? Direct my road: where must I begin? But the debate is, I suppose, of consequence?

Pap. Vraiment.

Y. Wild. How long have you left Paris, Papillion?

Pap. Twelve, dirteen year.

Y. Wild. I can't compliment you upon your progress in English.

Pap. The accent is difficult.

Y. Wild. But here you are at home.

Pap. C'est vrai.

Y. Wild. No stranger to fashionable places.

Pap. O faite!

Y. Wild. Acquainted with the fashionable figures of both sexes.

Pap. Sans doute.

Y. Wild. Well then, open your lecture: And, d'y'e hear, Papillion, as you have the honour to be promoted from the mortifying condition of an humble valet to the important charge of a private tutor, let us discard all distance between us. See me ready to slake my thirst at your fountain of knowledge, my Magnus Apollo.

Pap. Here then I disclose my Helicon to my poetical pupil.

Y. Wild. Hey, Papillion?

Pap. Sir?

Y. Wild. What is this? why, you speak English!

Pap. Without doubt.

Y. Wild. But like a native.

Pap. To be sure.

Y. Wild. And what am I to conclude from all this?

‘ *Pap.* Logically thus, Sir: Whoever speaks pure English is an Englishman. I speak pure English; ergo, I am an Englishman. There’s a categorical syllogism for you, major, minor, and consequence. What! do you think, Sir, that whilst you was busy at Oxford, I was idle? No, no, no.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Well, Sir, but notwithstanding your pleasantry, I must have this matter explain’d.

‘ *Pap.* So you shall, my good Sir; but don’t be in such a hurry. You can’t suppose I would give you the key, unless I meant you should open the door.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Why then, prithee, unlock it.

‘ *Pap.* Immediately. But by way of entering upon my post as preceptor, suffer me first to give you a hint. You must not expect, Sir, to find here, as at Oxford, men appearing in their real characters: every body there, Sir, knows that Dr. Musy is a fellow of Maudlin, and Tom Trifle a student of Christ-church; but this town is one great comedy, in which not only the principles, but frequently the persons, are feigned.

‘ *Y. Wild.* A useful observation.

‘ *Pap.* Why now, Sir, at the first coffee-house I shall enter you, you will perhaps meet a man, from whose decent sable dress, placid countenance, insinuating behaviour, short sword, with the waiter’s civil addition of *A dish of coffee for Dr. Julap*, you would suppose him to be a physician.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Well?

‘ *Pap.* Does not know diascordium from diaculum. An absolute French spy, concealed under the shelter of a huge medicinal perriwig.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Indeed!

‘ *Pap.* A martial figure, too, it is odds but you will encounter; from whose scars, title, dress, and address, you would suppose to have had a share in every action since the peace of the Pyrenees; runner to a gaming table, and bully to a bawdy-house. Battles, to be sure, he has been in—with the watch; and frequently a prisoner too in the round-house.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Amazing!

‘ *Pap.* In short, Sir, you will meet with lawyers who practise smuggling, and merchants who trade

‘ upon Hounslow-heath; reverend atheists, right
‘ honourable sharpers, and Frenchmen from the
‘ county of York.

‘ *Y. Wild.* In the last list I presume, you roll.

‘ *Pap.* Just my situation.

‘ *Y. Wild.* And pray, Sir, what may be your mo-
‘ tive for this whimsical transformation?

‘ *Pap.* A very harmless one, I promise you. I
‘ would only avail myself at the expence of folly and
‘ prejudice.

‘ *Y. Wild.* As how?’

Pap. Why, Sir——But to be better understood, I
believe it will be necessary to give you a short sketch
of the principal incidents of my life.

Y. Wild. Prithce do.

Pap. Why then, you are to know, Sir, that my for-
mer situation has been rather above my present con-
dition, having once sustained the dignity of sub-pre-
ceptor to one of those cheap rural academies with
which our county of York is so plentifully stocked.

Y. Wild. But to the point: Why this disguise?
why renounce your country?

Pap. There, Sir, you make a little mistake; it
was my country that renounced me.

Y. Wild. Explain.

Pap. In an instant: upon quitting the school, and
first coming to town, I got recommended to the
compiler of the Monthly Review.

Y. Wild. What, an author too?

Pap. Oh, a voluminous one. The whole region of
the belles lettres fell under my inspection; physic

divinity, and the mathematics, my mistress managed herself. There, Sir, like another Aristarch, I dealt out fame and damnation at pleasure. In obedience to the caprice and commands of my master, I have condemn'd books I never read; and applauded the fidelity of a translation, without understanding one syllable of the original.

Y. Wild. Ah! why, I thought acuteness of discernment, and depth of knowledge, were necessary to accomplish a critic.

Pap. Yes, Sir; but not a monthly one. Our method was very concise. We copy the title-page of a new book; we never go any further. If we are ordered to praise it, we have at hand about ten words, which, scatter'd through as many periods, effectually does the business; as, "laudable design, happy arrangement, spirited language, nervous sentiment, elevation of thought, conclusive argument." If we are to decry, then we have, "unconnected, flat, false, illiberal, stricture, reprehensible, unnatural." And thus, Sir, we pepper the author, and soon rid our hands of his work.

Y. Wild. A short recipe!

Pap. And yet, Sir, you have all the materials that are necessary? These are the arms with which we engage authors of every kind. To us all subjects are equal; plays or sermons, poetry or politics, music or midwifery, it is the same thing.

Y. Wild. How came you to resign this easy employment?

Pap. It would not answer. Notwithstanding what we say, people will judge for themselves; our

work hung upon hand, and all I could get from the Publisher was four shillings a-week and my small beer. Poor pittance!

Y. Wild. Poor, indeed.

Pap. Oh, half-starv'd me.

Y. Wild. What was your next change?

Pap. I was mightily puzzled to choose. 'Some would have me turn player, and others methodist preacher; but as I had no money to build me a tabernacle, I did not think it could answer; and as to player,—whatever might happen to me, I was determined not to bring a disgrace upon my family; and so I resolv'd to turn footman.

Y. Wild. Wisely resolv'd.

Pap. Yes, Sir, but not so easily executed.

Y. Wild. No!

Pap. Oh no, Sir. Many a weary step have I taken after a place. Here I was too old, there I was too young; here the last livery was too big, there it was too little; here I was awkward, there I was knowing: Madam disliked me at this house, her ladyship's woman at the next: so that I was as much puzzled to find out a place, as the great Cy-nic philosopher to discover a man. In short I was quite in a state of despair,' when chance threw an old friend in my way that quite retrieved my affairs.

Y. Wild. Pray, who might he be?

Pap. A little bit of a Swiss genius, who had been French usher with me at the same school in the country. I opened my melancholy story to him over three penny-worth of beef-a-la-mode, in a cellar

in St. Ann's. My little foreign friend purs'd up his lanthorn jaws, and with a shrug of contempt, " Ah, maitre Jean, vous n'avez pas la politique ; you have no finesse : to thrive here you must study the folly of your own country." " How, Monsieur ?" " Taisez vous : keep a your tongue. Autrefois I teach you speak French, now I teach-a you to forget English. Go vid me to my lodgement, I vil give you proper dress, den go present yourself to de same hotels, de very same house ; you will find all de doors dat was shut in your face as footman Anglois, will fly open demselves to a French valet de chambre."

Y. Wild. Well, Papillion ?

Pap. Gad, Sir, I thought it was but an honest artifice, so I determin'd to follow my friend's advice.

Y. Wild. Did it succeed ?

Pap. Better than expectation. My tawny face, long queu, and broken English, was a passe-partout. Besides, when I am out of place, this disguise procures me many resources.

Y. Wild. As how ?

Pap. Why, at a pinch, Sir, I am either a teacher of tongues, a friscur, a dentist, or a dancing-master : these, Sir, are hereditary professions to Frenchmen. But now, Sir, to the point : As you were pleased to be so candid with me, I was determined to have no reserve with you. You have studied books, I have studied men ; you want advice, and I have some at your service.

Y. Wild. Well, I'll be your customer.

Pap. But guard my secret. If I should be so unfortunate as to lose your place, don't shut me out from every other.

Y. Wild. You may rely upon me.

Pap. In a few years I shall be in a condition to retire from business; but whether I shall settle at my family-seat, or pass over to the continent, is as yet undetermined. Perhaps, in gratitude to the country, I may purchase a marquisate near Paris, and spend the money I have got by their means generously amongst them.

Y. Wild. A grateful intention. But let us sally. Where do we open?

Pap. Let us see—one o'clock—it is a fine day: the Mall will be crowded.

Y. Wild. Allons.

Pap. But don't stare, Sir: survey every thing with an air of habit and indifference.

Y. Wild. Never fear.

Pap. But I would, Sir, crave a moment's audience, upon a subject that may prove very material to you.

Y. Wild. Proceed.

Pap. You will pardon my presumption; but you have, my good master, one little foible that I could wish you to correct.

Y. Wild. What is it?

Pap. And yet it is a pity too, you do it so very well.

Y. Wild. Prithee be plain.

Pap. You have, Sir, a lively imagination, with a most happy turn for invention.

Y. Wild. Well.

Pap. But now and then in your narratives you are hurry'd, by a flow of spirits, to border upon the improbable, a little given to the marvellous.

Y. Wild. I understand you: what, I am somewhat subject too lying?

Pap. Oh, pardon me, Sir; I don't say that; no, no: only a little apt to embellish; that's all. To be sure it is a fine gift, that there is no disputing: but men in general are so stupid, so rigorously attach'd to matter of fact—And yet this talent of yours is the very soul and spirit of poetry; and why it should not be the same in prose, I can't for my life determine.

Y. Wild. You would advise me then not to be quite so poetical in my prose?

Pap. Why, Sir, if you would descend a little to the grovelling comprehension of the million, I think it would be as well.

Y. Wild. I'll think of it.

Pap. Besides, Sir, in this town, people are more smoky and suspicious. Oxford, you know, is the seat of the muses; and a man is naturally permitted more ornament and garniture to his conversation, than they will allow in this latitude.

Y. Wild. I believe you are right. But we shall be late. D'ye hear me, Papillion: if at any time you find me too poetical, give me a hint; your advice shan't be thrown away. [Exit.

Pap. I wish it mayn't; but the disease is too rooted to be quickly removed. Lord, how I have

sweat for him! yet he is as unembarrassed, easy, and fluent, all the time, as if he really believed what he said. Well, to be sure, he is a great master; it is a thousand pities his genius could not be converted to some public service. I think the government should employ him to answer the Brussels Gazette. I'll be hang'd if he is not too many for Monsieur Maubert, at his own weapons. [Exit.

SCENE II.—*The Park.*

Enter Miss GRANTAM Miss GODFREY, and SERVANT.

M. Gr. John, let the chariot go round to Spring-gardens; for your mistress and I shall call at Lady Bab's, Miss Arabella Allnight's, the Countess of Crumple's, and the tall man's, this morning. My dear Miss Godfrey, what trouble I have had to get you out! Why, child, you are as tedious as a long morning. Do you know now, that of all places of public rendezvous I honour the Park? forty thousand million of times preferable to the play-house! Don't you think so, my dear?

M. God. They are both well in their way.

M. Gr. Way! why, the purpose of both is the same; to meet company, i'n't it? What, d'ye think I go there for the plays, or come here for the trees? ha, ha! well, that is well enough. But, O Gemini! I beg a million of pardons: You are a prude, and have no relish for the little innocent liberties with which a fine woman may indulge herself in public.

M. God. Liberties in public!

M. Gr. Yes, child; such as encoring a song at an opera, interrupting a play in a critical scene of distress, hallooing to a pretty fellow cross the Mall as loud as if you were calling a coach. Why, do you know now, my dear, that by a lucky stroke in dress, and a few high airs of my own making, I have had the good fortune to be gazed at and followed by as great a crowd, on a Sunday, as if I was the Tripoly ambassador?

M. God. The good fortune, Ma'am! Surely the wish of every decent woman is to be unnotic'd in public.

M. Gr. Decent! oh, my dear queer creature, what a phrase have you found out for a woman of fashion! Decency is, child, a mere bourgeois, plebeian quality, and fit only for those who pay court to the world, and not for us to whom the world pays court. Upon my word, you must enlarge your ideas: You are a fine girl, and we must not have you lost; I'll undertake you myself. But, as I was saying—Pray, my dear, what was I saying?

M. God. I profess I don't recollect.

M. Gr. Hey!—Oh, ah! the Park. One great reason for my loving the Park is, that one has so many opportunities of creating connections.

M. God. Ma'am!

M. Gr. Nay, don't look grave. Why, do you know that all my male friendships are form'd in this place?

M. God. It is an odd spot: But you must pardon me if I doubt the possibility.

M. Gr. Oh, I will convince you in a moment ; for here seems to be coming a good smart figure that I don't recollect. I will throw out a lure.

M. God. Nay, for Heaven's sake !

M. Gr. I am determin'd, child : that is—

M. God. You will excuse my withdrawing.

M. Gr. Oh, please yourself, my dear.

[*Exit Miss Godfrey.*]

Enter YOUNG WILDING with PAPILLION.

Y. Wild. Your Ladyship's handkerchief, Ma'am.

M. Gr. I am, Sir, concern'd at the trouble—

Y. Wild. A most happy incident for me, Madam ; as chance has given me an honour, in one lucky minute, that the most diligent attention has not been able to procure for me in the whole tedious round of a revolving year.

M. Gr. Is this meant to me, Sir ?

Y. Wild. To whom else, Madam ? Surely, you must have mark'd my respectful assiduity, my uninterrupted attendance ; to plays, operas, balls, routs, and ridottos, I have pursued you like your shadow ; I have besieged your door for a glimpse of your exit and entrance, like a distressed creditor, who has no arms against privilege but perseverance.

Pap. So, now he is in for it ; stop him who can.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, ever since I quitted America, which I take now to be about a year, I have as faithfully guarded the live-long night your ladyship's portal, as a centinel the powder magazine in a fortified city.

Pap. Quitted America! well pull'd.

M. Gr. You have serv'd in America then?

Y. Wild. Full four years, Ma'am: and during that whole time, not a single action of consequence, but I had an opportunity to signalize myself; and I think I may, without vanity, affirm, I did not miss the occasion. You have heard of Quebec, I presume?

Pap. What the deuce is he driving at now?

Y. Wild. The project to surprise that place was thought a happy expedient, and the first mounting the breach a gallant exploit. There indeed the whole army did me justice.

M. Gr. I have heard the honour of that conquest attributed to another name.

Y. Wild. The mere taking the town, Ma'am. But that's a trifle: Sieges now-a-days are reduc'd to certainties; it is amazing how minutely exact we, who know the business, are at calculation. For instance now, we will suppose the commander in chief, addressing himself to me, was to say, "Colonel, I want to reduce that fortress; what will be the expence?"—"Why, please your highness, the reduction of that fortress will cost you one thousand and two lives, sixty-nine legs, ditto arms, fourscore fractures, with about twenty dozen of flesh wounds."

M. Gr. And you should be near the mar?

Y. Wild. To an odd joint, Ma'am. But, Madam, it is not to the French alone that my feats are confin'd: Cherokees, Catabaws, with all the Aws and

Eees of the continent, have felt the force of my arms.

Pap. This is too much, Sir.

Y. Wild. Hands off!—Nor am I less adroit at a treaty, Madam, than terrible in battle. To me we owe the friendship of the Five Nations; and I had the first honour of smoking the pipe of peace with the Little Carpenter.

M. Gr. And so young!

Y. Wild. This gentleman, though a Frenchman and an enemy, I had the fortune to deliver from the Mohawks, whose prisoner he had been for nine years. He gives a most entertaining account of their laws and customs: he shall present you with the wampum belt and a scalping-knife. Will you permit him, Madam, just to give you a taste of the military-dance, with a short specimen of their war-hoop.

Pap. For Heaven's sake!

M. Gr. The place is too public.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, after having gathered as many laurels abroad as would garnish a Gothic cathedral at Christmas, I return'd to reap the harvest of the well-fought field. Here it was my good fortune to encounter you; then was the victor vanquished; what the enemy could never accomplish, your eyes in an instant atchiev'd; prouder to serve here than command in chief elsewhere; and more glorious in wearing your chains, than in triumphing over the vanquish'd world.

M. Gr. I have got here a most heroical lover:

But I see Sir James Elliot coming, and must dismiss him.—[*Aside.*]—Well, Sir, I accept the tendre of your passion, and may find a time to renew our acquaintance; at present it is necessary we should separate.

Y. Wild. “Slave to your will, I live but to obey you.” But may I be indulged with the knowledge of your residence?

M. Gr. Sir?

Y. Wild. Your place of abode.

M. Gr. Oh, Sir, you can’t want to be acquainted with that; you have a whole year stood centinel at my ladyship’s portal.

Y. Wild. Madam, I—I—I——

M. Gr. Oh, Sir, your servant. Ha, ha, ha! What, you are caught? ha, ha, ha! Well, he has a most intrepid assurance. Adieu, my Mars. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*]

Pap. That last was an unlucky question, Sir.

Y. Wild. A little mal-a-propos, I must confess.

Pap. A man should have a good memory who deals much in this poetical prose.

Y. Wild. Poh! I’ll soon re-establish my credit. But I must know who this girl is. Hark ye, Papillion, could not you contrive to pump out of her footman—I see there he stands—the name of his mistress?

Pap. I will try.

[*Exit.*]

[*Wilding retires to the back of the stage.*]

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT and SERVANT.

Sir Ja. Music and an entertainment.

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Sir Ja. Last night, upon the water!

Ser. Upon the water, last night.

Sir Ja. Who gave it?

Ser. That, Sir, I can't say.

To them WILDING.

Y. Wild. Sir James Elliot, your most devoted.

Sir Ja. Ah, my dear Wilding! you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild. You will pardon my impatience; I interrupted you; you seem'd upon an interesting subject?

Sir Ja. Oh, an affair of gallantry.

Y. Wild. Of what kind?

Sir Ja. A young lady regal'd last night by her lover on the Thames.

Y. Wild. As how?

Sir Ja. A band of music in boats.

Y. Wild. Were they good performers?

Sir Ja. The best. Then conducted to Marblehall, where she found a magnificent collation.

Y. Wild. Well order'd?

Sir Ja. With elegance. After supper a ball; and, to conclude the night, a firework.

Y. Wild. Was the last well design'd?

Sir Ja. Superb.

Y. Wild. And happily executed?

Sir Ja. Not a single faux pas.

Y. Wild. And you don't know who gave it?

Sir Ja. I can't even guess.

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Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Ja. Why do you laugh?

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha! It was me.

Sir Ja. You!

Pap. You, Sir!

Y. Wild. Moi—me.

Pap. So, so, so; he's enter'd again.

Sir Ja. Why, you are fortunate to find a mistress in so short a space of time.

Y. Wild. Short! why, man, I have been in London these six weeks.

Pap. O Lord, O Lord!

Y. Wild. It is true, not caring to encounter my father, I have rarely ventur'd out but at nights.

Pap. I can hold no longer. Dear Sir——

Y. Wild. Peace, puppy.

Pap. A curb to your poetical vein.

Y. Wild. I shall curb your impertinence——But since the story is got abroad, I will, my dear friend, treat you with all the particulars.

Sir Ja. I shall hear it with pleasure——This is a lucky adventure: but he must not know he is my rival. *[Aside.]*

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, between six and seven my goddess embarked at Somerset-stairs, in one of the companies barges, gilt and hung with damask, expressly for the occasion.

Pap. Mercy on us!

Y. Wild. At the cabin-door she was accosted by a beautiful boy, who, in the garb of a Cupid, paid her some compliments in verse of my own composing.

The conceits were pretty ; allusions to Venus and the sea—the lady and the Thames—no great matter ; but, however, well tim'd, and, what was better, well taken.

Sir Ja. Doubtless.

Pap. At what a rate he runs !

Y. Wild. As soon as we had gained the centre of the river, two boats, full of trumpets, French-horns, and other martial music, struck up their sprightly strains from the Surry side, which were echoed by a suitable number of lutes, flutes, and hautboys, from the opposite shore. In this state, the oars keeping time, we majestically sail'd along, till the arches of the New Bridge gave a pause, and an opportunity for an elegant dessert in Dresden China, by Robinson. Here the repast clos'd with a few favourite airs from Eliza, Tenducci, and the Mattei.

Pap. Mercy on us !

Y. Wild. Opposite Lambeth I had prepared a naval engagement, in which Boscawen's victory over the French was repeated : the action was conducted by one of the commanders on that expedition, and not a single incident omitted.

Sir Ja. Surely you exaggerate a little.

Pap. Yes, yes, this battle will sink him.

Y. Wild. True to the letter, upon my honour. I shan't trouble you with a repetition of our collation, ball, feu d'artifice, with the thousand little incidental amusements that chance or design produced : it is enough to know, that all that could flatter the senses,

fire the imagination, or gratify the expectation, was there produc'd in a lavish abundance.

Sir Ja. The sacrifice was, I presume, grateful to your deity.

Y. Wild. Upon that subject you must pardon my silence.

Pap. Modest creature!

Sir Ja. I wish you joy of your success—For the present you will excuse me.

Y. Wild. Nay, but stay and hear the conclusion.

Sir Ja. For that I shall seize another occasion.

[*Exit.*

Pap. Nobly perform'd, Sir.

Y. Wild. Yes, I think happily hit off.

Pap. May I take the liberty to offer one question?

Y. Wild. Freely.

Pap. Pray, Sir, are you often visited with these waking dreams?

Y. Wild. Dreams! what dost mean by dreams?

Pap. Those ornamental reveries, those frolics of fancy, which, in the judgment of the vulgar, would be deem'd absolute flams.

Y. Wild. Why, Papillion, you have but a poor, narrow, circumscribed genius.

Pap. I must own, Sir, I have not sublimity sufficient to relish the full fire of your Pindaric muse.

Y. Wild. No; a plebeian soul! But I will animate thy clay: mark my example, follow my steps, and in time thou may'st rival thy master.

Pap. Never, never, Sir; I have not talents to fight battles without blows, and give feasts that don't

cost me a farthing—Besides, Sir, to what purpose are all these embellishments? Why tell the lady you have been in London a year?

Y. Wild. The better to plead the length, and consequently the strength, of my passion.

Pap. But why, Sir, a soldier?

Y. Wild. How little thou know'st of the sex! What, I suppose thou would'st have me attack them in mood and figure, by a pedantic classical quotation, or a pompous parade of jargon from the schools. What, do'st think that women are to be got like degrees?

Pap. Nay, Sir——

Y. Wild. No, no; the *scavoir vivre* is the science for them; the man of war is their man: they must be taken like towns, by lines of approach, counter-scarps, angles, trenches, coehorns, and covert-ways; then enter sword-in-hand, pell-mell! Oh, how they melt at the Gothic names of General Swapin-back, Count Rousomousky, Prince Montecuculi, and Marshal Fustinburg! Men may say what they will of their Ovid, their Petrarch, and their Waller; but I'll undertake to do more business by the single aid of the London Gazette, than by all the sighing, dying, crying crotchets, that the whole race of rhymers have ever produced.

Pap. Very well, Sir, this is all very lively; but remember the travelling pitcher; if you don't one time or other, under favour, lie yourself into some confounded scrape, I will be content to be hanged.

Y. Wild. Do you think so, Papillion?—And whenever that happens, if I don't lie myself out of it again, why then I will be content to be crucify'd. And so, along after the lady—[*Stops short, going out.*] Zounds, here comes my father! I must fly. Watch him, Papillion, and bring me word to Cardigan.
[*Exeunt separately.*]

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in a Tavern.*

YOUNG WILDING *and* PAPILLION *rising from table.*

Young Wilding.

GAD, I had like to have run into the old gentleman's mouth.

Pap. It is pretty near the same thing; for I saw him join Sir James Elliot: so your arrival is no longer a secret.

Y. Wild. Why then I must lose my pleasure, and you your preferment: I must submit to the dull decency of a sober family, and you to the customary duties of brushing and powdering. But I was so flutter'd at meeting my father, that I forgot the fair: Prithee, who is she?

Pap. There were two.

Y. Wild. That I saw.

Pap. From her footman I learnt her name was Godfrey.

Y. Wild. And her fortune?

Pap. Immense.

Y. Wild. Single, I hope?

Pap. Certainly.

Y. Wild. Then will I have her.

Pap. What, whether she will or no?

Y. Wild. Yes.

Pap. How will you manage that?

Y. Wild. By making it impossible for her to marry any one else.

Pap. I don't understand you, Sir.

Young Wild. Oh, I shall only have recourse to that talent you so mightily admire. You will see, by the calculation of a few anecdotes, how soon I will get rid of my rivals.

Pap. At the expence of the lady's reputation, perhaps.

Y. Wild. That will be as it happens.

Pap. And have you no qualms, Sir?

Y. Wild. Why, where's the injury?

Pap. No injury to ruin her fame!

Y. Wild. I will restore it to her again.

Pap. How?

Y. Wild. Turn tinker, and mend it myself.

Pap. Which way?

Y. Wild. The old way? solder it by marriage: that, you know, is the modern salve for every sore.

Enter WAITER.

Wait. An elderly gentleman to inquire for Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. For me! what sort of a being is it?

Wait. Being, Sir!

Y. Wild. Ay; how is he dress'd?

Wait. In a tye-wig and snuff-colour'd coat.

Pap. Zooks, Sir, it is your father.

Y. Wild. Show him up.

[*Exit Waiter.*]

Pap. And what must I do?

Y. Wild. Recover your broken English, but preserve your rank ; I have a reason for it.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Your servant, Sir : you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild. You have just prevented me, Sir: I was preparing to pay my duty to you.

O. Wild. If you thought it a duty, you should, I think, have sooner discharged it.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Was it quite so decent, Jack, to be six weeks in town, and conceal yourself only from me ?

Y. Wild. Six weeks! I have scarce been six hours.

O. Wild. Come, come ; I am better inform'd.

Y. Wild. Indeed, Sir, you are impos'd upon. This gentleman (whom first give me leave to have the honour of introducing to you), this, Sir, is the Marquis de Chatteau Brilliant, of an ancient house in Brittany ; who, travelling through England, chose to make Oxford for some time the place of his residence, where I had the happiness of his acquaintance.

O. Wild. Does he speak English ?

Y. Wild. Not fluently, but understands it perfectly.

Pap. Pray, Sir——

O. Wild. Any services, Sir, that I can render you here, you may readily command.

Pap. Beaucoup d'honneur.

Y. Wild. This gentleman, I say, Sir, whose qua-

lity and country are sufficient securities for his veracity, will assure you, that yesterday we left Oxford together.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Pap. C'est vrai.

O. Wild. This is amazing. I was at the same time inform'd of another circumstance too, that, I confess, made me a little uneasy, as it interfer'd with a favourite scheme of my own.

Y. Wild. What could that be, pray, Sir?

O. Wild. That you had conceiv'd a violent affection for a fair lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And had given her very gallant and very expensive proofs of your passion.

Y. Wild. Me, Sir!

O. Wild. Particularly last night; music, collations, balls, and fire-works.

Y. Wild. Monsieur le Marquis!—And pray, Sir, who could tell you all this?

O. Wild. An old friend of yours.

Y. Wild. His name, if you please?

O. Wild. Sir James Elliot.

Y. Wild. Yes; I thought he was the man.

O. Wild. Your reason.

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, though Sir James Elliot has a great many good qualities, and is upon the whole a valuable man, yet he has one fault which has long determined me to drop his acquaintance.

O. Wild. What may that be?

Y. Wild. Why you can't, Sir, be a stranger to his prodigious skill in the traveller's talent?

O. Wild. How!

Y. Wild. Oh, notorious to a proverb. His friends, who are tender of his fame, gloss over his foible, by calling him an agreeable novelist; and so he is with a vengeance. Why, he will tell ye more lies in an hour, than all the circulating libraries put together will publish in a year.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Y. Wild. Oh, he is the modern Mandeville at Oxford: he was always distinguished by the facetious appellation of the Bouncer.

O. Wild. Amazing!

Y. Wild. Lord, Sir, he is so well understood in his own country, that, at the last Hereford assize, a cause, as clear as the sun, was absolutely thrown away by his being merely mentioned as a witness.

O. Wild. A strange turn!

Y. Wild. Unaccountable. But there, I think, they went a little too far; for if it had to an oath, I don't think he would have bounc'd neither; but in common occurrences, there is no repeating after him. Indeed, my great reason for dropping him was, that my credit began to be a little suspected too.

Pap. Poor gentleman!

O. Wild. Why, I never heard this of him.

Y. Wild. That may be; but can there be a stronger proof of his practice than the flam he has been telling you of fire-works, and the Lord-knows-what! And I dare swear, Sir, he was very fluent and florid in his description.

O. Wild. Extremely.

Y. Wild. Yes, that is just his way; and not a syllable of truth from the beginning to the ending, Marquis?

Pap. Oh, dat is all a fiction, upon mine honour.

Y. Wild. You see, Sir, Sir——

O. Wild. Clearly. I really can't help pitying the poor man. I have heard of people, who, by long habit, become a kind of constitutional liars.

Y. Wild. Your observation is just; that is exactly his case.

Pap. I'm sure it is yours. [*Aside.*

O. Wild. Well, Sir, I suppose we shall see you this evening.

Y. Wild. The Marquis has an appointment with some of his countrymen, which I have promis'd to attend: besides, Sir, as he is an entire stranger in town, he may want my little services.

O. Wild. Where can I see you in about an hour? I have a short visit to make, in which you are deeply concern'd.

Y. Wild. I shall attend your commands; but where?

O. Wild. Why, here. Marquis, I am your obedient servant.

Pap. Votre serviteur tres humble.

[*Exit Old Wilding.*

Y. Wild. So, Papillion, that difficulty is dispatch'd. I think I am even with Sir James for his tattling.

Pap. Most ingeniously manag'd;—but are not you afraid of the consequence?

Y. Wild. I don't comprehend you.

Pap. A future explanation between the parties.

Y. Wild. That may embarrass: but the day is distant. I warrant I will bring myself off.

Pap. It is in vain for me to advise.

Y. Wild. Why, to say truth. I do begin to find my system attended with danger. Give me your hand, Papillion—I will reform.

Pap. Ah, Sir!

Y. Wild. I positively will. Why, this practice may in time destroy my credit.

Pap. That is pretty well done already. [*Aside.*]—Ay, think of that, Sir.

Y. Wild. Well, if I don't turn out the merest dull matter-of-fact fellow—But, Papillion, I must scribble a billet to my new flame. I think her name is—

Pap. Godfrey; her father, an India governor shut up in the strong room at Calcutta, left her all his wealth: she lives near Miss Grantam, by Grosvenor-square.

Y. Wild. A governor!—Oh ho!—Bushels of rupees and pecks of pagodas, I reckon. Well, I long to be rummaging. But the old gentleman will soon return: I will hasten to finish my letter. But, Papillion, what could my father mean by a visit in which I am deeply concern'd?

Pap. I can't guess.

Y. Wild. I shall know presently. To Miss Godfrey, formerly of Calcutta, now residing in Gros-

venor-square. Papillion, I won't tell her a word of a lie.

Pap. You won't Sir?

Y. Wild. No; it would be ungenerous to deceive a lady. No; I will be open, candid, and sincere.

Pap. And if you are, it will be the first time.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in Miss Grantam's House.*

Enter Miss GRANTAM and Miss GODFREY.

M. God. And you really like this gallant spark?

M. Gr. Prodigiously! Oh, I'm quite in love with his assurance! I wonder who he is: he can't have been long in town: A young fellow of his easy impudence must have soon made his way into the best of company.

M. God. By way of amusement he may prove no disagreeable acquaintance; but you can't surely have any serious designs upon him?

M. Gr. Indeed but I have.

M. God. And poor Sir James Elliot is to be discarded at once?

M. Gr. Oh, no!

M. God. What is your intention in regard to him?

M. Gr. Hey?—I can't tell you. Perhaps, if I don't like this new man better, I may marry him.

M. God. Thou art a strange giddy girl.

M. Gr. Quite the reverse? a perfect pattern of prudence; why, would you have me less careful of my person than my purse?

M. God. My dear?

M. Gr. Why, I say, child, my fortune being in money, I have some in India-bonds, some in the bank, some on this loan, some on the other! so that if one fund fails, I have a sure resource in the rest.

M. God. Very true.

M. Gr. Well, my dear, just so I manage my love-affairs: If I should not like this man—if he should not like me—if we should quarrel—if, if—or in short, if any of the ifs should happen which you know break engagements every day, why, by this means I shall be never at a loss.

M. God. Quite provident. Well, and pray on how many different securities have you at present plac'd out your love?

M. Gr. Three: The sober Sir James Elliot; the new America-man; and this morning I expect a formal proposal from an old friend of my father.

M. God. Mr. Wilding?

M. Gr. Yes; but I don't reckon much upon him: for you know, my dear, what can I do with an awkward, raw, college cub! Though upon second thoughts, that mayn't be too bad neither; for as I must have the fashioning of him, he may be easily moulded to one's mind.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Wilding, Madam.

M. Gr. Show him in. [*Exit Servant.*—You need not go, my dear; we have no particular business.

M. God. I wonder, now, what she calls particular business.

Enter Old WILDING.

O. Wild. Ladies, your servant. I wait upon you, Madam, with a request from my son, that he may be permitted the honour of kissing your hand.

M. Gr. Your son is in town then?

O. Wild. He came last night, Ma'am; and though but just from the university, I think I may venture to affirm with as little the air of a pedant as——

M. Gr. I don't, Mr. Wilding, question the accomplishments of your son; and shall own too, that his being descended from the old friend of my father is to me the strongest recommendation.

O. Wild. You honour me, Madam.

M. Gr. But, Sir, I have something to say—

O. Wild. Pray, Madam, speak out; it is impossible to be too explicit on these important occasions.

M. Gr. Why then, Sir, to a man of your wisdom and experience, I need not observe, that the loss of a parent to counsel and direct at this solemn crisis, has made a greater degree of personal prudence necessary in me.

O. Wild. Perfectly right, Ma'am.

M. Gr. We live, Sir, in a very censorious world; a young woman can't be too much on her guard; nor should I choose to admit any man in the quality of a lover, if there was not at least a strong probability—

O. Wild. Of a more intimate connection. I hope, Madam, you have heard nothing to the disadvantage of my son.

M. Gr. Not a syllable : but you know, Sir, there are such things in nature as unaccountable antipathies, aversions, that we take at first sight. I should be glad there could be no danger of that.

O. Wild. I understand you, Madam : you shall have all the satisfaction imaginable : Jack is to meet me immediately ; I will conduct him under your window ; and if his figure has the misfortune to displease, I will take care his addresses shall never offend you. Your most obedient servant. [*Exit.*]

M. Gr. Now, there is a polite, sensible, old father for you.

M. God. Yes ; and a very discreet, prudent daughter he is likely to have. Oh, you are a great hypocrite Kitty.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. A letter for you Madam. [*To Miss Godfrey.*] Sir James Elliot to wait on your ladyship. [*To Miss Grantam.*]

M. Gr. Lord, I hope he won't stay long here. He comes, and seems entirely wrapt up in the dismal : What can be the matter now ?

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir Ja. In passing by your door, I took the liberty, Ma'am, of enquiring after your health.

M. Gr. Very obliging. I hope, Sir, you received a favourable account.

Sir Ja. I did not know but you might have caught cold last night.

M. Gr. Cold! why, Sir, I hope I didn't sleep with my bed-chamber window open.

Sir Ja. Ma'am!

M. Gr. Sir!

Sir Ja. No, Ma'am; but it was rather hazardous to stay so late upon the water.

M. Gr. Upon the water!

Sir Ja. Not but the variety of amusements, it must be own'd, were a sufficient temptation.

M. Gr. What can he be driving at now?

Sir Ja. And pray, Madam, what think you of Young Wilding? is not he a gay, agreeable, sprightly—

M. Gr. I never give my opinion of people I don't know.

Sir Ja. You don't know him!

M. Gr. No.

Sir Ja. And his father I did not meet at your door!

M. Gr. Most likely you did.

Sir Ja. I am glad you own that, however: But for the son, you never——

M. Gr. Set eyes upon him.

Sir Ja. Really?

M. Gr. Really.

Sir Ja. Finely supported. Now, Madam, do you know that one of us is just going to make a very ridiculous figure?

M. Gr. Sir, I never had the least doubt of your talents for excelling in that way;

Sir Ja. Ma'am, you do me honour: but it does not happen to fall to my lot upon this occasion, however.

M. Gr. And that is a wonder!—what, then I am to be the fool of the comedy, I suppose?

Sir Ja. Admirably rally'd! But I shall dash the spirit of that triumphant laugh.

M. Gr. I dare the attack. Come on, Sir.

Sir Ja. Know then, and blush, if you are not all lost to shame as dead to decency, that I am no stranger to last night's transactions.

M. Gr. Indeed!

Sir Ja. From your first entering the barge at Somerset-house, to your last landing at Whitehall.

M. Gr. Surprising!

Sir Ja. Cupids, collations, feasts, fire-works, all have reach'd me.

M. Gr. Why, you deal in magic.

Sir Ja. My intelligence is as natural as it is infallible.

M. Gr. May I be indulg'd with the name of your informer?

Sir Ja. Freely, Madam. Only the very individual spark to whose folly you were indebted for this gallant profusion.

M. Gr. But his name?

Sir Ja. Young Wilding.

M. Gr. You had this story from him?

Sir Ja. I had.

M. Gr. From Wilding!—That is amazing.

Sir Ja. Oh ho! what, you are confounded at last, and no evasion, no subterfuge, no—

M. Gr. Look ye, Sir James; what you can mean by this strange story, and very extraordinary behaviour, it is impossible for me to conceive; but if it is meant as an artifice to palliate your infidelity to me, less pains would have answer'd your purpose.

Sir Ja. Oh, Madam, I know you are provided.

M. Gr. Matchless insolence! As you can't expect that I should be prodigiously pleas'd with the subject of this visit, you won't be surpris'd at my wishing it as short as possible.

Sir Ja. I don't wonder you feel pain at my presence; but you may rest secure you will have no interruption for me; and I really think it would be a pity to part two people so exactly formed for each other. Your Ladyship's servant. [*Going*].—But, Madam, though your sex secures you from any farther resentment, yet the present object of your favour may have something to fear. [*Exit*.

M. Gr. Very well. Now, my dear, I hope you will acknowledge the prudence of my plan. To what a pretty condition I must have been reduc'd, if my hopes had rested upon one lover alone!

M. God. But are you sure that your method to multiply may not be the means to reduce the number of your slaves?

M. Gr. Impossible!—Why, can't you discern that this flam of Sir James Elliot's is a mere fetch to favour his retreat!

M. God. And you never saw Wilding?

M. Gr. Never.

M. God. There is some mystery in this. I have,

too, here in my hand, another mortification that you must endure.

M. Gr. Of what kind?

M. God. A little allied to the last : it is from the military spark you met this morning.

M. Gr. What are the contents?

M. God. Only a formal declaration of love.

M. Gr. Why, you did not see him.

M. God. But it seems he did me.

M. Gr. Might I peruse it?—" Battles—no wounds so fatal—cannon-balls—Cupid—spring a mine—cruelty—die on a counterscarp—eyes—artillery—death—the stranger." It is address'd to you.

M. God. I told you so.

M. Gr. You will pardon me, my dear; but I really can't compliment you upon the supposition of a conquest at my expence.

M. God. That would be enough to make me vain? But why do you think it was so impossible?

M. Gr. And do you positively want a reason?

M. God. Positively.

M. Gr. Why, then, I shall refer you for an answer to a faithful counsellor and most accomplish'd critic.

M. God. Who may that be?

M. Gr. The mirror upon your toilette.

M. God. Perhaps you may differ in judgment.

M. Gr. Why, can glasses flatter?

M. God. I can't say I think that necessary.

M. Gr. Saucy enough!—But come, child, don't let us quarrel upon so whimsical an occasion; time

will explain the whole. You will favour me with your opinion of Young Wilding at my window.

M. God. I attend you.

M. Gr. You will forgive me, my dear, the little hint I dropt; it was meant merely to serve you; for indeed, child, there is no quality so insufferable in a young woman as self-conceit and vanity.

M. God. You are most prodigiously obliging.

M. Gr. I'll follow you, Miss. [*Exit Miss Godfrey.*] Pert thing!—She grows immoderately ugly. I always thought her awkward, but she is now an absolute fright.

M. God. (*within*). Miss, Miss Grantam, your hero's at hand.

M. Gr. I come.

M. God. As I live, the very individual stranger!

M. Gr. No sure!—Oh Lord, let me have a peep.

M. God. It is he, it is he, it is he! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter OLD WILDING, YOUNG WILDING, and PAPILLION.

O. Wild. There, Marquis, you must pardon me; for though Paris be more compact, yet surely London covers a much greater quantity—Oh, Jack, look at that corner house; how d'ye like it?

Y. Wild. Very well; but I don't see any thing extraordinary.

O. Wild. I wish, though, you were the master what it contains.

Y. Wild. What may that be, Sir?

O. Wild. The mistress, you rogue you: a fine girl, and an immense fortune; ay, and a prudent sensible wench into the bargain.

Y. Wild. Time enough yet, Sir.

O. Wild. I don't see that: You are, lad, the last of our race, and I should be glad to see some probability of its continuance.

Y. Wild. Suppose, Sir, you were to repeat your endeavours; you have cordially my consent.

O. Wild. No; rather too late in life for that experiment.

Y. Wild. Why, Sir, would you recommend a condition to me, that you disapprove of yourself?

O. Wild. Why, sirrah, I have done my duty to the public and my family, by producing you. Now, Sir, it is incumbent on you to discharge your debt.

Y. Wild. In the college cant, I shall beg leave to tick a little longer.

O. Wild. Why, then, to be serious, son, this is the very business I wanted to talk with you about. In a word, I wish you married; and by providing the lady of that mansion for the purpose, I have proved myself both a father and a friend.

Y. Wild. Far be it from me to question your care; yet some preparation for so important a change——

O. Wild. Oh, I will allow you a week.

Y. Wild. A little more knowledge of the world.

O. Wild. That you may study at leisure.

Y. Wild. Now all Europe is in arms, my design was to serve my country abroad.

O. Wild. You will be full as useful to it by recruiting her subjects at home.

Y. Wild. You are then resolv'd?

O. Wild. Fix'd.

Y. Wild. Positively.

O. Wild. Peremptorily.

Y. Wild. No prayers—

O. Wild. Can move me.

Y. Wild. How the deuce shall I get out of this toil? [*Aside.*—But suppose, Sir, there should be an unsurmountable objection?

O. Wild. Oh, leave the reconciling that to me; I am an excellent casuist.

Y. Wild. But I say, Sir, if it should be impossible to obey your commands?

O. Wild. Impossible!—I don't understand you.

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir!—But on my knees first let me crave your pardon.

O. Wild. Pardon! for what?

Y. Wild. I fear I have lost all title to your future favour.

O. Wild. Which way?

Y. Wild. I have done a deed——

O. Wild. Let's hear it.

Y. Wild. At Abington, in the county of Berks.

O. Wild. Well?

Y. Wild. I am——

O. Wild. What?

Y. Wild. Already married.

O. Wild. Married!

Pap. Married!

Y. Wild. Married.

O. Wild. And without my consent?

Y. Wild. Compell'd; fatally forc'd. Oh, Sir, did you but know all the circumstances of my sad, sad story, your rage would soon convert itself to pity.

O. Wild. What an unlucky event!—But rise, and let me hear it all.

Y. Wild. The shame and confusion I now feel renders that task at present impossible; I must therefore rely for the relation on the good offices of this faithful friend.

Pap. Me, Sir! I never heard one word of the matter.

O. Wild. Come, Marquis, favour me with the particulars.

Pap. Upon my vard, Sire, dis affair has so shock me, dat I am almost as incapable to tell de taie as your son.—[*To Young Wilding.*]—Dry-a your tears. What can I say, Sir?

Y. Wild. Any thing.—Oh!—[*Seems to weep.*]

Pap. You see, Sire.

O. Wild. Your kind concern at the misfortunes of my family calls for the most grateful acknowledgment.

Pap. Dis is great misfortunes, sans doute.

O. Wild. But if you, a stranger, are thus affected, what must a father feel?

Pap. Oh, beaucoup; a great deal more.

O. Wild. But since the evil is without a remedy, let us know the worst at once. Well, Sir, at Abington?

Pap. Yes, at Abington.

O. Wild. In the county of Berks?

Pap. Dat is right, in the county of Berks.

Y. Wild. Oh, oh!

O. Wild. Ah, Jack, Jack! are all my hopes then—
Though I dread to ask, yet it must be known; who
is the girl, pray, Sir?

Pap. De girl, Sir—[*Aside to Young Wilding.*]—
Who shall I say?

Y. Wild. Any body.

Pap. For de girl, I can't say upon my vard.

O. Wild. Her condition?

Pap. Pas grande condition; dat is to be sure.
But dere is no help—[*Aside to Young Wilding.*]—Sir,
I am quite a-ground.

O. Wild. Yes, I read my shame in his reserve:
some artful hussey.

Pap. Dat may be. Vat you call hussey?

O. Wild. Or perhaps some common creature.
But I'm prepar'd to hear the worst.

Pap. Have you no mercy?

Y. Wild. I'll step to your relief, Sir.

Pap. O Lord, a happy deliverance.

Y. Wild. Though it is almost death for me to speak,
yet it would be infamous to let the reputation of the
lady suffer by my silence. She is, Sir, of an ancient
house and unblemished character.

O. Wild. That is something.

Y. Wild. And though her fortune may not be equal
to the warm wishes of a fond father, yet—

O. Wild. Her name?

Y. Wild. Miss Lydia Sybthorp.

O. Wild. Sybthorp—I never heard of the name.—
But proceed.

Y. Wild. The latter end of last long vacation, I went with Sir James Elliot to pass a few days at a new purchase of his near Abington. There, at an assembly, it was my chance to meet and dance with this lady.

O. Wild. Is she handsome?

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir, more beautiful——

O. Wild. Nay, no raptures; but go on.

Y. Wild. But to her beauty she adds politeness, affability, and discretion; unless she forfeited that character by fixing her affection on me.

O. Wild. Modestly observ'd.

Y. Wild. I was deterr'd from a public declaration of my passion, dreading the scantiness of her fortune would prove an objection to you. Some private interviews she permitted.

O. Wild. Was that so decent?—But love and prudence, madness and reason.

Y. Wild. One fatal evening, the twentieth of September, if I mistake not, we were in a retir'd room innocently exchanging mutual vows, when her father, whom we expected to sup abroad, came suddenly upon us. I had just time to conceal myself in a closet.

O. Wild. What, unobserv'd by him?

Y. Wild. Entirely. But as my ill stars would have it, a cat, of whom my wife is vastly fond, had a few days before lodged a litter of kittens in the same

place; I unhappily trod upon one of the brood; which so provoked the implacable mother, that she flew at me with the fury of a tiger.

O. Wild. I have observ'd those creatures very fierce in defence of their young.

Pap. I shall hate a cat as long as I live.

Y. Wild. The noise rous'd the old gentleman's attention: he opened the door, and there discovered your son.

Pap. Unlucky.

Y. Wild. I rush'd to the door; but fatally my foot slipt at the top of the stairs, and down I came tumbling to the bottom; the pistol in my hand went off by accident; this alarmed her three brothers in the parlour, who, with all their servants, rush'd with united force upon me.

O. Wild. And so surpriz'd you!

Y. Wild. No, Sir; with my sword I for some time made a gallant defence, and should have inevitably escap'd, but a raw bon'd, over-grown clumsy cook-wench, struck at my sword with a kitchen-poker, broke it in two, and compell'd me to surrender at discretion; the consequence of which is obvious enough.

O. Wild. Natural. The lady's reputation, your condition, her beauty, your love, all combin'd to make marriage an unavoidable measure.

Y. Wild. May I hope, then, you rather think me unfortunate than culpable?

O. Wild. Why, your situation is a sufficient excuse: all I blame you for is, your keeping it a secret from

me. With Miss Grantam I shall make an awkward figure; but the best apology is the truth: I'll hasten and explain it to her all—Oh, Jack, Jack, this is a mortifying business.

Y. Wild. Most melancholy. [*Exit Old Wilding.*]

Pap. I am amaz'd, Sir, that you have so carefully conceal'd this transaction from me.

Y. Wild. Heyday! what, do you believe it too?

Pap. Believe it! why, is not the story of the marriage true?

Y. Wild. Not a syllable.

Pap. And the cat, and the pistol, and the poker?

Y. Wild. All invention. And were you really taken in?

Pap. Lord, Sir, how was it possible to avoid it?—Mercy on us! what a collection of circumstances have you crowded together!

Y. Wild. Genius; the mere effects of genius, Papillion. But to deceive you, who so thoroughly know me!

Pap. But to prevent that for the future, could you not just give your humble servant a hint when you are bent upon bouncing. Besides, Sir, if you recollect your fix'd resolution to reform—

Y. Wild. Ay, as to matter of fancy, the mere sport and frolic of invention: but in case of necessity—why, Miss Godfrey was at stake, and I was forc'd to use all my finesse.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Two letters, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Pap. There are two things, in my conscience my master will never want; a prompt lie, and a ready excuse for telling of it.

Y. Wild. Hum! business begins to thicken upon us: A challenge from Sir James Elliot, and a rendezvous from the pretty Miss Godfrey. They shall both be observ'd, but in their order; therefore the lady first. Let me see—I have not been twenty hours in town, and I have already got a challenge, a mistress, and a wife; now if I can get engaged in a chancery-suit, I shall have my hands pretty full of employment. Come, Papillion, we have no time to be idle. [*Exeunt.*

THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Miss Godfrey's House.*

Miss GRANTAM and Miss GODFREY.

Miss Godfrey.

‘ UPON my word, Miss Grantam, this is but
‘ an idle piece of curiosity: you know the man is
‘ already dispos’d of, and therefore—

‘ *M. Gr.* That is true, my dear; but there is in
‘ this affair some mystery, that I must and will have
‘ explain’d.

‘ *M. God.* Come, come, I know the grievance.—
‘ You can’t brook that this spark, though even a
‘ married man, should throw off his allegiance to
‘ you, and enter a volunteer in my service.

‘ *M. Gr.* And so you take the fact for granted?

‘ *M. God.* Have I not his letter?

‘ *M. Gr.* Conceited creature!—I fancy, Miss, by
‘ your vast affection for this letter, it is the first of
‘ the kind you have ever received.

‘ *M. God.* Nay, my dear, why should you be
‘ piqu’d at me? the fault is none of mine; I dropt
‘ no handkerchief; I threw out no lure; the bird
‘ came willingly to hand, you know.

‘ *M. Gr.* Metaphorical too! What, you are set-
‘ ting up for a wit as well as a belle! Why, really,

‘ Madam, to do you justice, you have full as fine
‘ pretensions to one as the other.

‘ *M. God.* I fancy, Madam, the world will not
‘ form their judgment of either from the report of
‘ a disappointed rival.

‘ *M. Gr.* Rival! admirably rally’d—But let me
‘ tell you, Madam, this sort of behaviour, Madam,
‘ at your own house, whatever may be your beauty,
‘ is no great proof of your breeding, Madam.

‘ *M. God.* As to that, Ma’am, I hope I shall al-
‘ ways show a proper resentment to any insult that
‘ is offer’d me, let it be in whose house it will. The
‘ assignation, Ma’am, both time and place, was of
‘ your own contriving.

‘ *M. Gr.* Mighty well, Ma’am!

‘ *M. God.* But if, dreading a mortification, you
‘ think proper to alter your plan, your chair, I be-
‘ lieve, is in waiting.

‘ *M. Gr.* It is, Madam! then let it wait—Oh,
‘ what, that was your scheme! but it won’t take,
‘ Miss: the contrivance is a little too shallow.

‘ *M. God.* I don’t understand you.

‘ *M. Gr.* Cunning creature! So all this insolence
‘ was concerted, it seems; a plot to drive me out
‘ of the house, that you might have the fellow all
‘ to yourself: but I have a regard for your charac-
‘ ter, though you neglect it. Fie, Miss, a passion
‘ for a married man! I really blush for you.

‘ *M. God.* And I most sincerely pity you. But
‘ curb your choler alittle: the inquiry you are about

‘ to make requires rather a cooler disposition of
‘ mind ; and by this time the hero is at hand.

‘ *M. Gr.* Mighty well ; I am prepar’d. But, Miss
‘ Godfrey, if you really wish to be acquitted of all
‘ artificial underhand dealings in this affair, suffer
‘ me in your name to manage the interview.

‘ *M. God.* Most willingly : but he will recollect
‘ your voice.

‘ *M. Gr.* Oh, that is easily alter’d, [*Enter a maid,*
‘ *who whispers Miss Grantam, and exit.*]—It is he ;
‘ but hide yourself, Miss, if you please.

‘ *M. God.* Your hood a little forwarder, Miss ;
‘ you may be known, and then we shall have the
‘ language of politeness inflam’d to proofs of a vio-
‘ lent passion.

M. Gr. You are prodigiously cautious.

SCENE II.—*The street.*

‘ *Enter YOUNG WILDING.*

‘ *Y. Wild.* This rendezvous is something in the
‘ Spanish taste, imported, I suppose, with the gui-
‘ tar. At present, I presume the custom is confin’d
‘ to the great : but it will descend ; and in a couple
‘ of months I shall not be surpriz’d to hear an at-
‘ torney’s hackney clerk rousing at midnight a mil-
‘ liner’s prentice, with an *Ally, Ally Croker*. But that,
‘ if I mistake not, is the temple ; and see my god-
‘ dess herself. Miss Godfrey !

[*Miss Grantam appears at the balcony.*

‘ *M. Gr.* Hush !

‘ *Y. Wild.* Am I right, Miss ?

‘ *M. Gr.* Softly. You receiv’d my letter I see,
‘ Sir.

‘ *Y. Wild.* And flew to the appointment with
‘ more—

‘ *M. Gr.* No raptures, I beg. But you must not
‘ suppose this meeting meant to encourage your
‘ hopes.

‘ *Y. Wild.* How, Madam!

‘ *M. Gr.* Oh, by no means, Sir, for though I
‘ own your figure is pleasing, and your conversa-
‘ tion—

‘ *M. Gr.* Hold, Miss; when did I ever converse
‘ with him? [*from within.*]

‘ *M. Gr.* Why, did not you see him in the park?

‘ *M. Gr.* True, Madam; but the conversation
‘ was with you.

‘ *M. Gr.* Bless me! you are very difficult. I say,
‘ Sir, though your person may be unexceptionable,
‘ yet your character—

‘ *Y. Wild.* My character!

‘ *M. Gr.* Come, come, you are better known
‘ than you imagine.

‘ *Y. Wild.* I hope not.

‘ *M. Gr.* Your name is Wilding.

‘ *Y. Wild.* How the deuce came she by that!—
‘ True, Madam.

‘ *M. Gr.* Pray, have you never heard of a Miss
‘ Grantam?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Frequently.

‘ *M. Gr.* You have. And had you never any fa-

‘ yourable thoughts of that lady: Now mind,
‘ Miss.

‘ *Y. Wild.* If you mean as a lover, never. The
‘ lady did me the honour to have a small de-
‘ sign upon me.

‘ *M. God.* I hear every word, Miss.

M. Gr. But you need not lean so heavy upon me;
‘ he speaks loud enough to be heard—I have been
‘ told, Sir, that—

‘ *Y. Wild.* Yes, Ma’am, and very likely by the
‘ lady herself.

‘ *M. Gr.* Sir!

‘ *Y. Wild.* Oh, Madam, I have another obliga-
‘ tion in my pocket to Miss Grantam, which must
‘ be discharg’d in the morning.

M. Gr. Of what kind?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Why, the lady, finding an old hum-
‘ ble servant of hers a little lethargic, has thought
‘ fit to administer me in a jealous draught, in order
‘ to quicken his passion.

‘ *M. Gr.* Sir, let me tell you——

‘ *M. God.* Have a care, you will betray yourself.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Oh, the whole story will afford you in-
‘ finite diversion; such a farrago of fights and
‘ feasts. But, upon my honour, the girl has a fer-
‘ tile invention.

‘ *M. God.* So! what, that story was yours; was
‘ it.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Pray, Madam, don’t I hear another
‘ voice?

‘ *M. Gr.* A distant relation of mine.—Every

‘ syllable false.—But, Sir, we have another charge
‘ against you. Do you know any thing of a lady
‘ at Abington?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Miss Grantam again. Yes, Madam, I
‘ have some knowledge of that lady.

‘ *M. Gr.* You have? Well, Sir, and that being the
‘ case, how could you have the assurance—

‘ *Y. Wild.* A moment’s patience, Ma’am. That
‘ lady, that Berkshire lady, will, I can assure you,
‘ prove no bar to my hopes.

‘ *M. Gr.* How, Sir; no bar?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Not in the least, Ma’am; for that lady
‘ exists in idea only.

‘ *M. Gr.* No such person!

‘ *Y. Wild.* A mere creature of the imagination.

‘ *M. Gr.* Indeed.

‘ *Y. Wild.* The attacks of Miss Grantam were so
‘ powerfully enforc’d too by paternal authority, that
‘ I had no method of avoiding the blow, but by the
‘ sheltering myself under the conjugal shield.

‘ *M. Gr.* You are not marry’d then?—But what
‘ credit can I give to the professions of a man, who
‘ in an article of such importance, and to a person of
‘ such respect—

‘ *Y. Wild.* Nay, Madam, surely Miss Godfrey
‘ should not accuse me of a crime her own charms
‘ have occasion’d. Could any other motive, but the
‘ fear of losing her, prevail on me to trifle with a fa-
‘ ther, or compel me to infringe those laws which I
‘ have hitherto so inviolably observ’d?

‘ *M. Gr.* What laws, Sir?

‘ *Y. Wild.* The sacred laws of truth, Ma’am.

‘ *M. Gr.* There, indeed, you did yourself an infinite violence. But when the whole of the affair is discover’d, will it be so easy to get rid of Miss Grantam? The violence of her passion, and the old gentleman’s obstinacy——

‘ *Y. Wild.* Are nothing to a mind resolv’d.

‘ *M. Gr.* Poor Miss Grantam!

‘ *Y. Wild.* Do you know her, Madam?

‘ *M. Gr.* I have heard of her: but you, Sir, I suppose, have been long on an intimate footing?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Bred up together from children.

‘ *M. Gr.* Brave!—Is she handsome?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Her paint comes from Paris, and her femme de chambre is an excellent artist.

‘ *M. Gr.* Very well!—Her shape?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Pray, Madam, is not Curzon esteem’d the best stay-maker for people inclin’d to be crooked?

‘ *M. Gr.* But as to the qualities of her mind; for instance, her understanding?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Uncultivated.

‘ *M. Gr.* Her wit?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Borrowed.

‘ *M. Gr.* Her taste?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Trifling.

‘ *M. Gr.* And her temper?

‘ *Y. Wild.* Intolerable.

‘ *M. Gr.* A finish’d picture. But come, these are not your real thoughts. this is a sacrifice you think due to the vanity of our sex.

‘ *Y. Wild.* My honest sentiments: and, to convince you how thoroughly indifferent I am to that lady, I would, upon my veracity, as soon take a wife from the Grand Signior’s seraglio.—Now, Madam, I hope you are satisfy’d.

‘ *M. Gr.* And you would not scruple to acknowledge this before the lady’s face?

‘ *Y. Wild.* The first opportunity.

‘ *M. Gr.* That I will take care to provide you. Dare you meet me at her house?

‘ *Y. Wild.* When?

‘ *M. Gr.* In half an hour.

‘ *Y. Wild.* But won’t a declaration of this sort appear odd at—a—

‘ *M. Gr.* Come, no evasion; your conduct and character seem to me a little equivocal, and I must insist on this proof at least of——

‘ *Y. Wild.* You shall have it.

‘ *M. Gr.* In half an hour?

‘ *Y. Wild.* This instant.

‘ *M. Gr.* Be punctual.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Or may I forfeit your favour.

‘ *M. Gr.* Very well; till then, Sir, adieu.—Now I think I have my spark in the toil; and if the fellow has any feeling, if I don’t make him smart for every article——Come, my dear, I shall stand in need of your aid. [Exit.

‘ *Y. Wild.* So I am now, I think, arrived at a critical period. If I can but weather this point—— But why should I doubt it? it is in the day of distress only that a great man displays his abilities. But I shall want Papillion? where can the puppy be?

‘ Enter PAPILLION.

‘ *Y. Wild.* So, Sir, where have you been rambling?

‘ *Pap.* I did not suppose you would want——

‘ *Y. Wild.* Want!——you are always out of the way. Here have I been forc’d to tell forty lies upon my own credit, and not a single soul to vouch for the truth of them.

‘ *Pap.* Lord, Sir, you know——

‘ *Y. Wild.* Don’t plague me with your apologies; but it is lucky for you that I want your assistance. Come with me to Miss Grantam’s.

‘ *Pap.* On what occasion?

‘ *Y. Wild.* An important one: but I’ll prepare you as we walk.

‘ *Pap.* Sir, I am really—I could wish you would be so good as to——

‘ *Y. Wild.* What, desert your friend in the heat of battle! Oh, you peltroon!

‘ *Pap.* Sir, I would do any thing, but you know I have not talents.

‘ *Y. Wild.* I do; and for my own sake shall not task them too high.

‘ *Pap.* Now I suppose the hour is come when we shall pay for all.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Why, what a dastardly, hen-hearted— But come, Papillion, this shall be your last campaign. Don’t droop, man; confide in your leader, and remember, *Sub auspice Teucro nil desperandum.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*An apartment in Miss Grantam's house.*

Enter a SERVANT, conducting in OLD WILDING.

Serv. My lady, Sir, will be at home immediately, Sir James Elliot is in the next room waiting her return.

O. Wild. Pray, honest friend, will you tell Sir James that I beg the favour of a word with him. [*Exit Serv.*] This unthinking boy! Half the purpose of my life has been to plan this scheme for his happiness, and in one heedless hour has he mangled all.

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT.

Sir, I ask your pardon; but upon so interesting a subject, I know you will excuse my intrusion. Pray, Sir, of what credit is the family of the Sybthorps in Berkshire?

Sir Ja. Sir!

O. Wild. I don't mean as to property; that I am not so solicitous about; but as to their character: Do they live in reputation? Are they respected in the neighbourhood?

Sir Ja. The family of the Sybthorps!

O. Wild. Of the Sybthorps.

Sir Ja. Really I don't know, Sir.

O. Wild. Not know!

Sir Ja. No; it is the very first time I ever heard of the name.

O. Wild. How steadily he denies it! Well done, Ba-

ronet! I find Jack's account was a just one. [*Aside.*] Pray, Sir James, recollect yourself.

Sir Ja. It will be to no purpose.

O. Wild. Come, Sir, your motive for this affected ignorance is a generous, but unnecessary proof of your friendship for my son: but I know the whole affair.

Sir Ja. What affair?

O. Wild. Jack's marriage.

Sir Ja. What Jack?

O. Wild. My son Jack.

Sir Ja. Is he marry'd?

O. Wild. Is he marry'd! why, you know he is.

Sir Ja. Not I, upon my honour.

O. Wild. Nay, that is going a little too far: but to remove all your scruples at once, he has own'd it himself.

Sir Ja. He has!

O. Wild. Ay, ay, to me. Every circumstance: Going to your new purchase at Abington—meeting Lydia Sybthorp at the assembly—their private interviews—surpris'd by the father—pistol—poker—and marriage; in short, every particular.

Sir Ja. And this account you had from your son?

O. Wild. From Jack; not two hours ago.

Sir Ja. I wish you joy, Sir.

O. Wild. Not much of that, I believe.

Sir Ja. Why, Sir, does the marriage displease you?

O. Wild. Doubtless.

Sir Ja. Then I fancy you may make yourself easy.

O. Wild. Why so?

Sir Ja. You have got, Sir, the most prudent daughter-in-law in the British dominions.

O. Wild. I am happy to hear it.

Sir Ja. For though she mayn't have brought you much, I'm sure she'll not cost you a farthing.

O. Wild. Ay; exactly Jack's account.

Sir Ja. She'll be easily jointur'd.

O. Wild. Justice shall be done her.

Sir Ja. No provision necessary for younger children.

O. Wild. No, Sir! why not?—I can tell you, if she answers your account, not the daughter of a duke——

Sir Ja. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

O. Wild. You are merry, Sir.

Sir Ja. What an unaccountable fellow!

O. Wild. Sir!

Sir Ja. I beg your pardon, Sir. But with regard to this marriage——

O. Wild. Well, Sir!

Sir Ja. I take the whole history to be neither more nor less than an absolute fable.

O. Wild. How, Sir?

Sir Ja. Even so.

O. Wild. Why, Sir, do you think my son would dare to impose upon me?

Sir Ja. Sir, he would dare to impose upon any body. Don't I know him?

O. Wild. What do you know?

Sir Ja. I know, Sir, that his narratives gain him more applause than credit; and that, whether from

constitution or habit, there is no believing a syllable he says.

O. Wild. Oh, mighty well, Sir!—He wants to turn the tables upon Jack.—But it won't do; you are forestall'd; your novels won't pass upon me.

Sir Ja. Sir!

O. Wild. Nor is the character of my son to be blasted with the breath of a bouncer.

Sir Ja. What is this?

O. Wild. No, no, Mr. Mandeville, it won't do; you are as well known here as in your own county of Hereford.

Sir Ja. Mr. Wilding, but that I am sure this extravagant behaviour owes its rise to some impudent impositions of your son, your age would scarce prove your protection.

O. Wild. Nor, Sir, but that I know my boy equal to the defence of his own honour, should he want a protector in this arm, wither'd and impotent as you may think it.

Enter Miss GRANTAM.

M. Gr. Bless me, gentlemen, what is the meaning of this?

Sir Ja. No more at present, Sir: I have another demand upon your son; we'll settle the whole together.

O. Wild. I am sure he will do you justice.

M. Gr. How, Sir James Elliot! I flatter'd myself that you had finish'd your visits here, Sir. Must I be the eternal object of your outrage? not only in-

sulted in my own person, but in that of my friends! Pray, Sir, what right——

O. Wild. Madam, I ask your pardon; a disagreeable occasion brought me here: I come, Madam, to renounce all hopes of being nearer ally'd to you, my son unfortunately being married already.

M. Gr. Married!

Sir Ja. Yes, Madam, to a lady in the clouds: and because I have refus'd to acknowledge her family, this old gentleman has behav'd in a manner very inconsistent with his usual politeness.

O. Wild. Sir, I thought this affair was to be reserv'd for another occasion; but you, it seems——

M. Gr. Oh, is that the business!—Why, I begin to be afraid that we are here a little in the wrong, Mr. Wilding.

O. Wild. Madam!

M. Gr. Your son has just confirm'd Sir James Elliot's opinion, at a conference under Miss Godfrey's window.

O. Wild. Is it possible?

M. Gr. Most true; and assign'd two most whimsical motives for the unaccountable tale.

O. Wild. What can they be?

M. Gr. An aversion for me, whom he has seen but once; and an affection for Miss Godfrey, whom I am almost sure he never saw in his life.

O. Wild. You amaze me.

M. Gr. Indeed, Mr. Wilding, your son is a most extraordinary youth; he has finely perplex'd us all. I think, Sir James, you have a small obligation to him.

Sir Ja. Which I shall take care to acknowledge the first opportunity.

O. Wild. You have my consent. An abandon'd profligate! Was his father a proper subject for his — But I discard him.

M. Gr. Nay, now, gentlemen, you are rather too warm: I can't think Mr. Wilding bad-hearted at the bottom. This is a levity. —

O. Wild. How, Madam, a levity!

M. Gr. Take my word for it, no more; inflam'd into habit by the approbation of his juvenile friends. Will you submit his punishment to me? I think I have the means in my hands, both to satisfy your resentments, and accomplish his cure into the bargain.

Sir Ja. I have no quarrel to him, but for the ill offices he has done me with you.

M. Gr. D'ye hear, Mr. Wilding? I am afraid my opinion with Sir James must cement the general peace.

O. Wild. Madam, I submit to any —

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. Mr. Wilding to wait upon you, Madam.

[*Exit.*

M. Gr. He is punctual, I find. Come, good folks, you all act under my direction. You, Sir, will get from your son, by what means you think fit, the real truth of the Abington business. You must likewise seemingly consent to his marriage with Miss Godfrey, whom I shrewdly suspect he has, by some

odd accident, mistaken for me; the lady herself shall appear at your call. Come, Sir James, you will withdraw. I intend to produce another performer, who will want a little instruction. Kitty?

Enter KITTY.

Let John show Mr. Wilding in to his father: then come to my dressing-room; I have a short scene to give you in study. [*Exit Kitty.*]—The girl is lively, and, I warrant, will do her character justice. Come, Sir James. Nay, no ceremony; we must be as busy as bees.

[*Exit Miss Grantam and Sir James.*]

O. Wild. This strange boy!—But I must command my temper.

Y. Wild. (*Speaking as he enters.*)—People to speak with me! See what they want, Papillion.—My father here! that's unlucky enough.

O. Wild. Ha, Jack, what brings you here?

Y. Wild. Why, I thought it my duty to wait upon Miss Grantam, in order to make her some apology for the late unfortunate—

O. Wild. Well, now, that is prudently as well as politely done.

Y. Wild. I am happy to meet, Sir, with your approbation.

O. Wild. I have been thinking, Jack, about my daughter-in-law: as the affair is public, it is not decent to let her continue longer at her father's.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Would it not be right to send for her home?

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. I think so. Why then, to-morrow my chariot shall fetch her.

Y. Wild. The devil it shall! [*Aside*].—Not quite so soon, if you please, Sir.

O. Wild. No! Why not?

Y. Wild. The journey may be dangerous in her present condition.

O. Wild. What's the matter with her?

Y. Wild. She is big with child, Sir.

O. Wild. An audacious—Big with child! that is fortunate. But, however, an easy carriage, and short stages, can't hurt her.

Y. Wild. Pardon me, Sir, I dare not trust her: she is six months gone.

O. Wild. Nay, then, there may be danger indeed. But should not I write to her father, just to let him know that you have discovered the secret?

Y. Wild. By all means, Sir, it will make him extremely happy.

O. Wild. Why, then, I will instantly about it. Pray, how do you direct to him?

Y. Wild. Abington, Berkshire.

O. Wild. True; but his address?

Y. Wild. You need not trouble yourself, Sir: I shall write by this post to my wife, and will send your letter inclos'd.

O. Wild. Ay, ay, that will do. [*Going*.]

Y. Wild. So, I have parry'd that thrust.

O. Wild. Though, upon second thoughts, Jack,

that will rather look too familiar for an introductory letter.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And these country gentlemen are full of punctilios—No, I'll send him a letter apart; so give me his direction.

Y. Wild. You have it, Sir.

O. Wild. Ay, but his name: I have been so hurry'd that I have entirely forgot it.

Y. Wild. I am sure so have I. [*Aside.*—His name—his name, Sir—Hopkins.

O. Wild. Hopkins!

Y. Wild. Yes, Sir.

O. Wild. That is not the same name that you gave me before: that, if I recollect, was either Sypthorp or Sybthorp.

Y. Wild. You are right, Sir; that is his paternal appellation: but the name of Hopkins he took for an estate of his mother's: so he is indiscriminately called Hopkins or Sybthorp; and now I recollect I have his letter in my pocket—he signs himself Sybthorp Hopkins.

O. Wild. There is no end of this: I must stop him at once. Hark ye, Sir, I think you are call'd my son?

Y. Wild. I hope, Sir, you have no reason to doubt it.

O. Wild. And look upon yourself as a gentleman?

Y. Wild. In having the honour of descending from you.

O. Wild. And that you think a sufficient pretension?

Y. Wild. Sir—pray, Sir—

O. Wild. And by what means do you imagine your ancestors obtain'd that distinguishing title? By their pre-eminence in virtue, I suppose.

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. And has it never occur'd to you, that what was gain'd by honour might be lost by infamy?

Y. Wild. Perfectly, Sir.

O. Wild. Are you to learn what redress even the imputation of a lie demands; and that nothing less than the life of the adversary can extinguish the affront?

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. Then, how dare you call yourself a gentleman? you, whose life has been one continued scene of fraud and falsity! And would nothing content you but making me a partner in your infamy? Not satisfied with violating that great band of society, mutual confidence, the most sacred rights of nature must be invaded, and your father made the innocent instrument to circulate your abominable impositions!

Y. Wild. But, Sir!

O. Wild. Within this hour my life was near sacrific'd in defence of your fame: But perhaps that was your intention; and the story of your marriage merely calculated to send me out of the world, as a grateful return for my bringing you into it.

Y. Wild. For heaven's sake, Sir.

O. Wild. What other motive?

Y. Wild. Hear me, I intreat you, Sir.

O. Wild. To be again impos'd on! no, Jack, my eyes are open'd at last.

Y. Wild. By all that's sacred, Sir—

O. Wild. I am now deaf to your delusions.

Y. Wild. But hear me, Sir. I own the Abington business—

O. Wild. An absolute fiction.

Y. Wild. I do.

O. Wild. And how dare you—

Y. Wild. I crave but a moment's audience.

O. Wild. Go on.

Y. Wild. Previous to the communication of your intention for me, I accidentally met with a lady, whose charms—

O. Wild. So!—what, here's another marriage trumped out? but that is a stale device. And, pray, Sir, what place does this lady inhabit? Come, come, go on; you have a fertile invention, and this is a fine opportunity. Well, Sir, and this charming lady, residing, I suppose, *in nubibus*—

Y. Wild. No, Sir; in London.

O. Wild. Indeed!

Y. Wild. Nay, more, and at this instant in this house.

O. Wild. And her name—

Y. Wild. Godfrey.

O. Wild. The friend of Miss Grantam?

Y. Wild. The very same, Sir.

O. Wild. Have you spoke to her?

Y. Wild. Parted from her not ten minutes ago; nay, am here by her appointment.

O. Wild. Has she favoured your address?

Y. Wild. Time, Sir, and your approbation, will, I hope.

O. Wild. Look ye, Sir, as there is some little probability in this story, I shall think it worth farther inquiry. To be plain with you, I know Miss Godfrey; am intimate with her family; and though you deserve but little from me, I will endeavour to aid your intention. But if, in the progress of this affair, you practise any of your usual arts; if I discover the least falsehood, the least duplicity, remember you have lost a father.

Y. Wild. I shall submit without a murmur.

[*Exit Old Wild.*]

Enter PAPILLION.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Well, Papillion.

‘ *Pap.* Sir, here has been the devil to pay within.

‘ *Y. Wild.* What’s the matter?

‘ *Pap.* A whole legion of cooks, confectioners, musicians, waiters, and watermen.

‘ *Y. Wild.* What do they want?

‘ *Pap.* You, Sir.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Me!

‘ *Pap.* Yes, Sir; they have brought in their bills.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Bills! for what?

‘ *Pap.* For the entertainment you gave last night upon the water.

‘ *Y. Wild.* That I gave?

‘ *Pap.* Yes, Sir; you remember the bill of fare: I am sure the very mention of it makes my mouth water.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Prithee, are you mad? There must be
‘ some mistake; you know that I—

‘ *Pap.* They have been vastly puzzled to find
‘ out your lodgings; but Mr. Robinson meeting by
‘ accident with Sir James Elliot, he was kind enough
‘ to tell him where you liv’d. Here are the bills :
‘ Almack’s, twelve dozen of Claret, ditto Cham-
‘ pagne, Frontiniac, Sweetmeats, Pine-apples : the
‘ whole amount is *l.* 372, 9s. besides music and fire-
‘ works.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Come, Sir, this is no time for trifling.

‘ *Pap.* Nay, Sir, they say they have gone full as
‘ low as they can afford; and they were in hopes,
‘ from the great satisfaction you express’d to Sir
‘ James Elliot, that you would throw them in an
‘ additional compliment.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Hark ye, Mr. Papillion, if you don’t
‘ cease your impertinence, I shall pay you a compli-
‘ ment that you would gladly excuse.

‘ *Pap.* Upon my faith, I relate but the mere
‘ matter of fact. You know, Sir, I am but bad at
‘ invention; though this incident, I can’t help think-
‘ ing, is the natural fruit of your happy one.

‘ *Y. Wild.* But are you serious? is this possible?

‘ *Pap.* Most certain. It was with difficulty I re-
‘ strain’d their impatience; but, however, I have dis-
‘ patch’d them to your lodgings, with a promise that
‘ you shall immediately meet them.

‘ *Y. Wild.* Oh, there we shall soon rid our hands
‘ of the troop.’—Now, Papillion, I have news for
you. My father has got to the bottom of the whole
Abington business.

Pap. The deuce?

Y. Wild. We parted this moment. Such a scene!

Pap. And what was the issue?

Y. Wild. Happy beyond my hopes. Not only an act of oblivion, but a promise to plead my cause with the fair.

Pap. With Miss Godfrey?

Y. Wild. Who else?—He is now with her in another room.

Pap. And there is no—you understand me—in all this?

Y. Wild. No, no; that is all over now—my reformation is fix'd.

Pap. As a weather-cock.

Y. Wild. Here comes my father.

Enter OLD WILDING.

O. Wild. Well, Sir, I find in this last article you have condescended to tell me the truth: the young lady is not averse to your union; but in order to fix so mutable a mind, I have drawn up a slight contract, which you are both to sign.

Y. Wild. With transport.

O. Wild. I will introduce Miss Godfrey. [*Exit.*

Y. Wild. Did not I tell you, Papillion?

Pap. This is amazing, indeed!

Y. Wild. Am not I a happy fortunate?—But they come.

Enter OLD WILDING and MISS GODFREY.

O. Wild. If, Madam, he has not the highest sense of the great honour you do him, I shall cease to re-

gard him.—There, Sir, make your own acknowledgements to that lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. This is more than you merit; but let your future behaviour testify your gratitude.

Y. Wild. Papillion! Madam! Sir!

O. Wild. What, is the puppy petrified! Why don't you go up to the lady?

Y. Wild. Up to the lady!—That lady?

O. Wild. That lady!—To be sure. What other lady?—To Miss Godfrey?

Y. Wild. That lady Miss Godfrey?

O. Wild. What is all this?—Hark ye, Sir; I see what you are at: but no trifling; I'll be no more the dupe of your double detestable—Recollect my last resolution: This instant your hand to the contract, or tremble at the consequence.

Y. Wild. Sir, that, I hope, is—might not I—to be sure—

O. Wild. No further evasions! There, Sir.

Y. Wild. Heigh ho! [*Signs it.*]

O. Wild. Very well. Now, Madam, your name if you please.

Y. Wild. Papillion, do you know who she is?

Pap. That's a question indeed! Don't you, Sir?

Y. Wild. Not I, as I hope to be sav'd.

Enter a SERVANT.

Ser. A young lady begs to speak with Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. With me?

M. God. A young lady with Mr. Wilding!

Ser. Seems distress'd, Madam, and extremely pressing for admittance.

M. God. Indeed! There may be something in this! You must permit me, Sir, to pause a little: who knows but a prior claim may prevent—

O. Wild. How, Sir, who is this lady?

Y. Wild. It is impossible for me to divine, Sir.

O. Wild. You know nothing of her?

Y. Wild. How should I?

O. Wild. You hear, Madam.

M. God. I presume your son can have no objection to the lady's appearance.

Y. Wild. Not in the least, Madam.

M. God. Show her in, John. [Exit Ser.]

O. Wild. No, Madam, I don't think there is the least room for suspecting him: he can't be so abandon'd as to—But she is here. Upon my word, a sightly woman.

Enter KITTY as MISS SYBTHORP.

Kit. Where is he?—Oh, let me throw my arms—my life, my—

Y. Wild. Heyday!

Kit. And could you leave me? and for so long a space? Think how the tedious time has lagg'd along.

Y. Wild. Madam!

Kit. But we are met at last, and now will part no more.

Y. Wild. The deuce we won't!

Kit. What, not one kind look; no tender word to hail our second meeting!

Y. Wild. What the devil is all this?

Kit. Are all your oaths, your protestations, come to this? Have I deserv'd such treatment? Quitted my father's house, left all my friends, and wander'd here alone in search of thee, thou first, last, only object of my love.

O. Wild. To what can all this tend? Hark ye, Sir, unriddle this mystery.

Y. Wild. Davus, non Edipus sum. It is beyond me, I confess. Some lunatic escap'd from her keeper, I suppose.

Kit. Am I disown'd then, condemn'd, slighted?

O. Wild. Hold; let me inquire into this matter a little. Pray, Madam—You seem to be pretty familiar here.—Do you know this gentleman?

Kit. Too well.

O. Wild. His name?

Kit. Wilding.

O. Wild. So far she is right. Now yours, if you please.

Kit. Wilding.

Omnes. Wilding!

O. Wild. And how came you by that name, pray?

Kit. Most lawfully, Sir: by the sacred band, the holy tie that made us one.

O. Wild. What, marry'd to him?

Kit. Most true.

Omnes. How!

Y. Wild. Sir, may I never—

O. Wild. Peace, monster!—One question more: Your maiden name?

Kit. Sybthorp.

O. Wild. Lydia, from Abington, in the county of Berks?

Kit. The same.

O. Wild. As I suspected. So then the whole story is true, and the monster is marry'd at last.

Y. Wild. Me, Sir! By all that's—

O. Wild. Eternal dumbness seize thee, measureless liar?

Y. Wild. If not me, hear this gentleman—Marquis—

Pap. Not I; I'll be drawn into none of your scrapes: it is a pit of your own digging; and so get out as well as you can. Mean time I'll shift for myself. [Exit.

O. Wild. What evasion now, monster?

M. God. Deceiver!

O. Wild. Liar!

M. God. Impostor!

Y. Wild. Why, this is a general combination to distract me; but I will be heard. Sir, you are grossly impos'd upon: the low contriver of this woman's shallow artifice I shall soon find means to discover; and as to you, Madam, with whom I have been suddenly surpris'd into a contract, I most solemnly declare this is the first time I ever set eyes on you.

O. Wild. Amazing confidence! Did not I bring her at your own request?

Y. Wild. No.

M. God. Is not this your own letter?

Y. Wild. No.

Kit. Am not I your wife?

Y. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Did not you own it to me?

Y. Wild. Yes—that is—no, no.

Kit. Hear me.

Y. Wild. No.

M. God. Answer me.

Y. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Have not I—

Y. Wild. No, no, no. Zounds! you are all mad;
and if I stay, I shall catch the infection. [*Exit*]

Enter Sir JAMES ELLIOT and Miss GRANTAM.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

M. Gr. Finely perform'd.

O. Wild. You have kept your promise, and I thank
you, Madam.

M. Gr. My medicine was somewhat rough, Sir,
but in desperate cases, you know—

O. Wild. If his cure is completed, he will grate-
fully acknowledge the cause; if not, the punish-
ment comes far short of his crimes. It is needless
to pay you any compliments, Sir James; with that
lady you can't fail to be happy. I shan't venture to
hint a scheme I have greatly at heart, till we have
undeniable proofs of the success of our operations.
To the ladies, indeed, no character is so dangerous
as that of a liar:

They in the fairest fames can fix a flaw,
And vanquish females whom they never saw.



PARSONS'S MINOR THEATRE.



COMMISSARY.

Act 4. Sc 2.

Engr. del.

Printed for J. Parsons, at the Theatre Box Mar. 1796.

August 1796.

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FOR J.

THE COMMISSARY.

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS,

WRITTEN BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

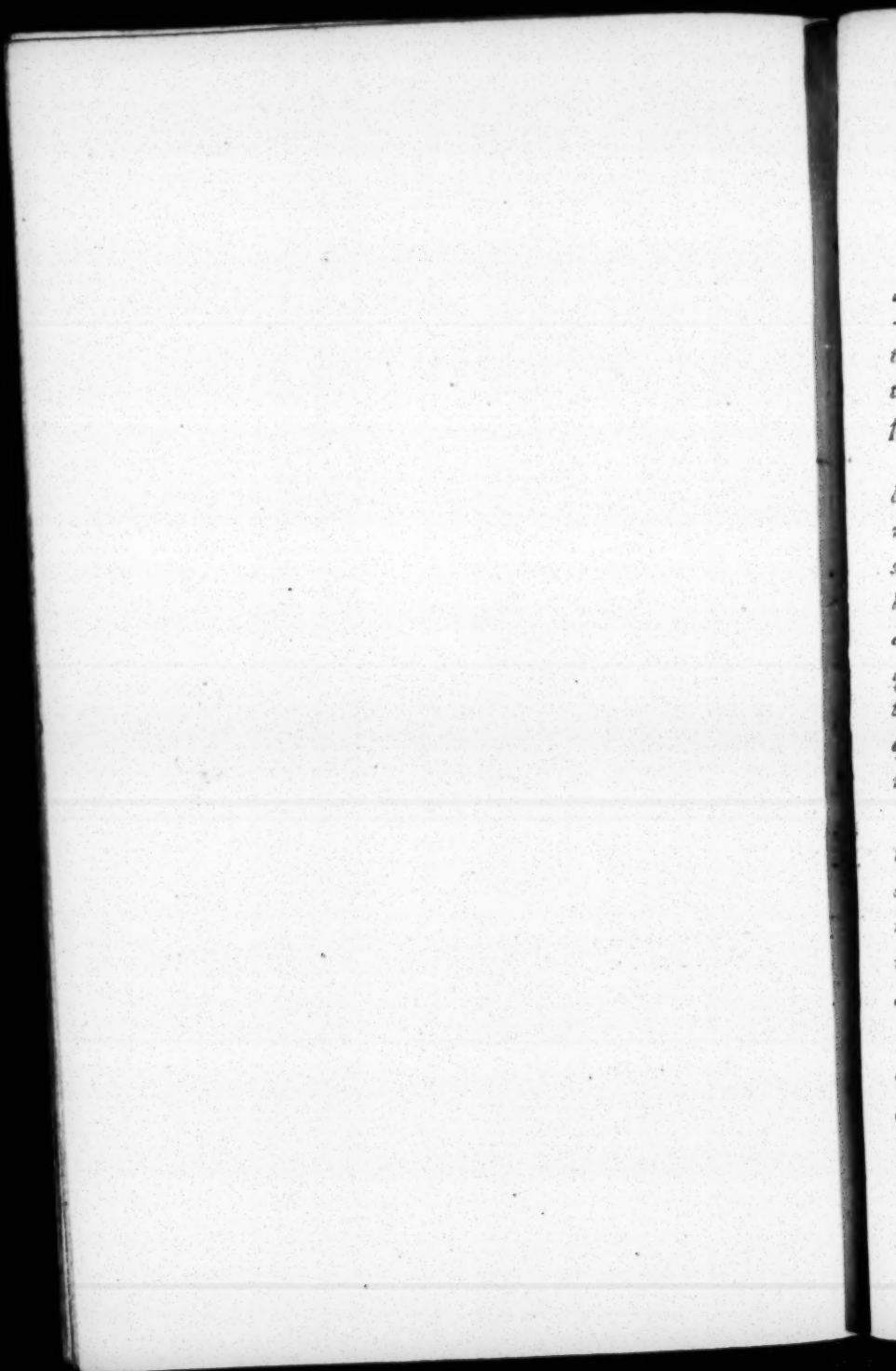
*THEATRES-ROYAL COVENT-GARDEN AND
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The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,
FOR J. PARSONS, N° 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1794.



THE COMMISSARY.

THIS piece, written by the late Samuel Foote, Esq. was given to the public, for the first time, in the season of 1765, at the little theatre in the Hay-market; and keener satire, or more fairly applied, never came from the pen of that pleasant and witty writer.

Zachary Fungus, rich in the plunder of the unfortunate of other lands; returns to his native country: loaded with wealth he knows not how to use; invested with consequence he is unable properly to support; he becomes the jest, even of his domestics, who see through his native ignorance, too glaring to escape their notice; and the application of his ill-gotten stores towards the attainment of those qualities which form the exteriors of a gentleman, together with the dissipation of his time in the fruitless endeavour; are the subjects of the scene, which holds up to public ridicule and contempt a character which merits universal reprobation.

When this production first appeared, it was young days with that inimitable comedian Parsons; but the picture he gave the audience of the late Doctor Arne approached so near to the original, whose peculiarities justified the imitation, that several in the house went away, not to be convinced but what the Doctor himself had actually been before them.

The younger Bannister, in the revival of this piece, in the course of last summer, on its native boards, performed the part of Zachary Fungus, in a stile not more attractive than genuine. Wewitzer's Isaac, was every thing the part required; and Suett made the most of his GRUEL.

Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Zachary Fungus,	-	MR. QUICK
Isaac Fungus,	-	MR. POWELL
Gruell, -	-	MR. THOMPSON
Le Fleur, -	-	MR. WEWITZER
Young Loveit,		MR. DAVIES
Coachman, -	-	MR. LEDGER
Bridoun, -	-	MR. EVATT.

Women.

Widow Loveit,	-	MRS. PITT
Dolly, -	-	MRS. PLATT
Jenny, -	-	MISS STUART
Mrs. Mechlin,	-	MRS. WEBB.

HAY-MARKET.

Men.

Zachary Fungus,	-	MR. BANNISTER, jun.
Isaac Fungus,	-	MR. WEWITZER
Gruell, -	-	MR. SUETT
Le Fleur, -	-	MR. ABBOTT
Young Loveit,	-	MR. BENSON
Coachman, -	-	MR. LEDGER
Bridoun, -	-	MR. EVATT.

Women.

Widow Loveit,	-	MRS. POWELL
Dolly, -	-	MISS HEARD
Jenny, -	-	MISS DE CAMP
Mrs. Mechlin,	-	MRS. WEBB.



THE COMMISSARY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Mrs. MECHLIN's House.*

[*Loud knocking at the door.*]

Enter JENNY.

Jenny.

RAP, rap, rap, up-stairs and down, from morning to night ;—if this same commissary stays much longer amongst us, my mistress must e'en hire a porter. Who's there ?

SIMON without.

Sim. Is Mrs. Mechlin at home ?

Jen. No. (*Opens the door.*) Oh ! what, is it you, Simon ?

Enter SIMON.

Sim. At your service, sweet Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Why, you knock with authority ; and what are your commands, Master Simon ?

Sim. I come, Madam, to receive those of your mistress. What, Jenny, has she any great affair on the anvil? Her summons is most exceedingly pressing; and you need not be told, child, that a man of my consequence does not trouble himself about trifles.

Jen. Oh, Sir, I know very well you principal actors don't perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, Ma'am; but, notwithstanding your ironical sneer, it is not every man that will do for your mistress; her agents must have genius and parts: I don't suppose, in the whole bills of mortality, there is so general and extensive a dealer as my friend Mrs. Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be sure, we have plenty of customers and for various kinds of commodities; it would be pretty difficult, I fancy, to——

Sim. Commodities! Your humble servant, sweet Mrs. Jane; yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities, indeed.

Jen. Mr. Simon, I don't understand you: I suppose it is no secret in what sort of goods our dealing consists.

Sim. No, no; they are pretty well known.

Jen. And, to be sure, though now and then, to oblige a customer, my mistress does condescend to smuggle a little——

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Yet there are no people in the liberty of Westminster that live in more credit than we do.

Sim. Bravo!

‘ *Jen.* The very best of quality are not asham’d
to visit my mistress.

‘ *Sim.* They have reason.

‘ *Jen.* Respected by the neighbours.

‘ *Sim.* I know it.

‘ *Jen.* Punctual in her payments.

‘ *Sim.* To a moment.

‘ *Jen.* Regular hours.

‘ *Sim.* Doubtless.

‘ *Jen.* Never miss the sarmant on Sundays.

‘ *Sim.* I own it.

‘ *Jen.* Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unless
now and then, when the poor gentlewoman hap-
pens to be overtaken in liquor.

‘ *Sim.* Granted.

‘ *Jen.* Not at all given to lying, but, like other
tradesfolks, in the way of her business.’

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well! then pray, Sir, what would you
insinuate? Look you, Mr. Simon, don’t go to cast
reflections upon us; don’t think to blast the reputa-
tion of our——

Sim. Hark ye, Jenny, are you serious?

Jen. Serious! Ay, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are.

Jen. Upon my word, Mr. Simon, you should not
give your tongue such a licence; let me tell you,
these airs do not become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day! why, where the deuse have I got?
Sure, I have mistaken the house; is not this Mrs.
Mechlin’s?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs. Mechlin, at the sign of the Star, in the parish of St. Paul's?

Jen. Bravo!

Sim. That commercial caterpillar!

Jen. I know it.

Sim. That murderer of manufactures?

Jen. Doubtless.

Sim. That walking warehouse?

Jen. Granted.'

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter?

Jen. Very well.

Sim. That engrosser and seducer of virgins?

Jen. Keep it up, Master Simon.

Sim. That forestaller of bagnios?

Jen. Incomparably fine.'

Sim. That canting, cozening, money-lending, match-making, pawnbroking—— [*Loud knocking.*]

Jen. Mighty well, Sir: here comes my mistress; she shall thank you for the pretty picture you have been pleased to draw.

Sim. Nay, but, dear Jenny——

Jen. She shall be told how lightly she stands in your favour.

Sim. But, my sweet girl—— [*Knock again.*]

Jen. Let me go, Mr. Simon; don't you hear?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at once?

Jen. Hands off.

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs. Jane, and dictate the articles.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN, followed by a hackney-coachman with several bundles, in a capuchin, a bonnet, and her cloaths pinned up.

Mrs. Mech. So, hussy; what, must I stay all day in the streets? Who have we here? The devil's in the wench, I think—One of your fellows, I suppose—Oh, is it you? How fares it, Simon?

Jen. Madam, you should not have waited a minute; but Mr. Simon—

Sim. Hush! hush! you barbarous jade—

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open the door, flew up stairs, fell over the landing-place, and quite barr'd up the way.

Sim. Yes; and I am afraid I have put out my ankle. Thanks, Jenny; you shall be no loser, you slut. *[Aside.*

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon!—Oh, Lord have mercy upon me, what a round have I taken?—Is the wench petrified? Why don't you reach me a chair? don't you see I am tired to death?

Jen. Indeed, Ma'am, you'll kill yourself.

Sim. Upon my word, Madam Mechlin, you should take a little care of yourself; indeed you labour too hard.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothing: only victuals and cloaths; more cost than worship—Why does not the wench take the things from the fellow? Well, what's your fare?

Coach. Mistress, 'tis honestly worth half-a-crown.

Mrs. Mech. Give him a couple of shillings, and send him away.

Coach. I hope you'll tip me the tester to drink?

Mrs. Mech. Them there fellows are never contented: Drink! Stand farther off; why, you smell already as strong as a beer-barrel.

Coach. Mistress, that's because I have already been drinking.

Mrs. Mech. And are you not ashamed, you sot, to be eternally guzzling? You had better buy you some cloaths.

Coach. No, mistress; my honour won't let me do that.

Mrs. Mech. Your honour! And pray how does that hinder you?

Coach. Why, when a good gentlewoman like you cries, Here, coachman, here's something to drink—

Mrs. Mech. Well!

Coach. Would it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing else? No, mistress, my conscience won't let me; because why, 'tis the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs. Mech. Did you ever hear such a blockhead!

Coach. No, no, mistress; tho' I am a poor man, I won't forfeit my honour; my cattle, tho' I love 'em, poor beastesses, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mrs. Mech. Yes, you and your horses give pretty strong proofs of your honour; for you have no cloaths on your back, and they have no flesh. Well, Jenny,

give him the sixpence—I here, there; lay it out as you will.

Coach. It will be to your health, mistress; it shall melt at the Meuse before I go home; I shall be careful to clear my conscience.

Mrs. Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coach. You need not, Mistress; your servant.

[*Exit Coach.*]

Mrs. Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny?

Jen. The Gentleman, Ma'am, about the Gloucestershire living.

Mrs. Mech. He was! Oh! oh! what, I suppose his stomach's come down. Does he like the encumbrance? will he marry the party?

Jen. Why, that article seems to go a little against him.

Mrs. Mech. Does it so? then let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air, it will soon give him an appetite. He'll stick to his honour too, till his cassock is wore to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, Ma'am, it seems pretty rusty already.

Mrs. Mech. Devilish squeamish, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?—

Jen. Yes, Madam.

Mrs. Mech. So that the affair will be a secret to all but himself. But he must quickly resolve, for next week his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promised to call about four.

Mrs. Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loss for a husband; there is to my knowledge a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a small place in the customhouse.

Jen. He shall know it.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and tell him that the party's party has interest enough to obtain it whenever he will. And then the bridegroom may put the purchase-money too of that same presentation into his pocket.

Jen. Truly, Ma'am, I should think this would prove the best match for the lady.

Mrs. Mech. Who doubts it?—Here, Jenny, carry these things above stairs. Take care of the eigrette, leave the watch upon the table, and be sure you don't mislay the pearl-necklace: the lady goes to Mrs. Corneleys's to-night; and, if she has any luck, she will be sure to redeem it to-morrow.

Sim. What a world of affairs! it is a wonder, Ma'am, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs. Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, Master Simon—But I have a great affair in hand—Such an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all.

Sim. If I, Ma'am, can be of the least use—

Mrs. Mech. Of the highest! there's no doing without you—You know the great—

Enter JENNY.

Jen. I have put the things where you ordered, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Very well, you may go. [*Exit Jenny.*]

I say, you know the great commissary that is come to lodge in my house. Now they say this Mr. Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor; heaven knows how he came by it; but that, you know, is no business of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant abroad. (*Loud knocking.*) Who the deuse can that be? But let it be who it will, you must not go till I speak to you.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. The widow Loveit, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. What, the old liquorish dowager from Devonshire Square? Show her in. (*Exit Jenny.*) You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon, I shall soon dispatch her affair. [*Exit Simon.*]

Enter Mrs. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, good morning to you, good Mrs. Mechlin. John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs. Mech. You had better sit here, Madam.

Mrs. Lov. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—Ugh, ugh, ugh,—(*Coughs.*) Consider I have no time to lose, and you are always so full of employment.

Mrs. Mech. Forget you! you shall judge, Mrs. Loveit. I have, Ma'am, provided a whole cargo of husbands for you, of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and sizes: so you see you have nothing to do but choose.

Mrs. Lov. To choose, Mrs. Mechlin! Lord help me, what choice can I have? I lock upon wedlock to

be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and a great one it was! My poor dear man that's gone, I shall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs. Mech. Psha, Madam, don't let us trouble our heads about him, 'tis high time that he was forgot.

Mrs. Lov. But won't his relations think me rather too quick?

Mrs. Mech. Not a jot: the greatest compliment you could pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you reason to be fond of the state. But what do you mean by quick? Why, he has been buried these three weeks—

Mrs. Lov. And three days, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed! quite an age.

Mrs. Lov. Yes: but I shall never forget him; sleeping or waking, he's always before me. His dear swell'd belly, and his poor shrunk legs; Lord bless me, Mrs. Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan.

Mrs. Mech. No!

Mrs. Lov. No, indeed; and then, his bit of a purple nose, and his little weezen face as sharp as a razor—Don't mention it; I can never forget him.

[Cries.

Mrs. Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance indeed! But, Ma'am, if you continue to be so fond of your last husband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs. Lov. Why, what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? a poor lone widow woman as I am; there's nobody minds me; my tenants behindhand, my servants all careless, my children undutiful—Ugh, ugh, ugh—

[Coughs

Mrs. Mech. You have a villainous cough, Mrs. Loveit; shall I send for some lozenges?

Mrs. Lov. No, I thank you, 'tis nothing at all; mere habit; just a little trick I've got.

Mrs. Mech. But I wonder you shou'd have all these vexations to plague you, Madam, you who are so rich, and so——

Mrs. Lov. Forty thousand in the four-per-cent every morning I rise, Mrs. Mechlin, besides two houses at Hackney: but then my affairs are so weighty and intricate; there is such tricking in lawyers, and such torments in children, that I can't do by myself; I must have a helpmate: quite necessity, no matter of choice.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, I understand you: you marry meereley for convenience; just only to get an assistant, a kind of a guard, a fence to your property?

Mrs. Lov. Nothing else.

Mrs. Mech. I thought so; quite prudential; so that age is none of your object: you don't want a scampering, giddy, sprightly, young——

Mrs. Lov. Young!—Heaven forbid. What, do you think, like some ladies I know, that I want to have my husband taken for one of my grandchildren? No, no; thank Heaven, such vain thoughts never enter'd my head.

Mrs. Mech. But yet, as your matters stand, he ought not to be so very old neither; for instance now, of what use to you would be a husband of sixty?

Mrs. Lov. Sixty! Are you mad, Mrs. Mechlin? what, do you think I want to turn nurse?

Mrs. Mech. Or fifty-five?

Mrs. Lov. Ugh, ugh, ugh——

Mrs. Mech. Or fifty?

Mrs. Lov. Oh! that's too cunning an age;——men, now-a-days, rarely marry at fifty, they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs. Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or——

Mrs. Lov. Shall I, Mrs. Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind?

Mrs. Mech. I believe, Ma'am, that will be your best way.

Mrs. Lov. Why then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to secure and preserve their obedience will be to marry a man that won't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. Why, I thought you declar'd against youth?

Mrs. Lov. So I do, so I do; but then, six or seven and twenty is not so very young, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a pretty ripe age: for at that time of life men can bustle and stir; they are not easily check'd, and whatever they take in hand they go thro' with.

Mrs. Lov. True, true.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, it is then they may be said to be useful; it is the only tear and wear season.

Mrs. Lov. Right, right.

Mrs. Mech. Well, Ma'am, I see what you want, and to-morrow about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call——

Mrs. Lov. I shan't fail.

Mrs. Mech. I think I can suit you.

Mrs. Lov. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs. Mech. You may depend upon't, I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs. Lov. But, Mrs. Mechlin, be sure don't let him be older than that, not above seven or eight and twenty at most; and let it be as soon as you conveniently can.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, Ma'am.

Mrs. Lov. Because, you know, the more children I have by the second venter, the greater plague I shall prove to those I had by the first.

Mrs. Mech. True, Ma'am, you had better lean on me to the door: But, indeed, Mrs. Loveit, you are very malicious to your children, very revengeful, indeed.

Mrs. Lov. Ah, they deserve it;—you can't think what sad whelps they turn out; no punishment can be too much; if their poor father cou'd but have foreseen they wou'd have——why did I mention the dear man? it melts me too much. Well, peace be with him.—To-morrow about this time, Mrs. Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs. Mech. I can't say.

Mrs. Lov. Well, a good day, good Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Here, John, take care of your mistress.

[Exit Mrs. Loveit.]

A good morning to you, Ma'am. Jenny, bid Simon come up.—A husband! there now is a proof of the prudence of age; I wonder they don't add a clause to the act to prevent the old from marrying clan-

destinely as well as the young. I am sure there are as many unsuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

Enter SIMON.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr. Fungus's servants below.

Sim. Three or four strange faces.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, some of that troop, I suppose—Come, Simon, be seated.—Well, Simon, as I was telling you; this Mr. Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart-load of money, and who (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts—

Sim. I formerly knew him, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no.

Mrs. Mech. I am glad of that—This spark, I say, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determin'd to rival them too in every other accomplishment.

Sim. Will that be so easy? why he must be upwards of——

Mrs. Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to set up for a gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. But fine talents, you know, and a strong inclination——

Sim. That, indeed——

Mrs. Mech. Then, I promise you, he spares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent!

Mrs. Mech. Oh, always at it. Learning something or other from morning to night; my house is a perfect academy, such a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, musicians—but, however, to sweeten the pill, I have a fellow-feeling for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, Ma'am; that's always the rule.

Mrs. Mech. But one of his studies is really diverting, I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs. Mech. Oratory.—You know his first ambition is to have a seat in a certain assembly;—and in order to appear there with credit, Mr. What d'ye Call 'um, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture upon speaking, and there is such haranguing and bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll see enough on't yourself; for, do you know, Simon, you are to be his valet de chambre?

Sim. Me, Madam!

Mrs. Mech. Ay, his privy counsellor, his confident, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that answer?

Mrs. Mech. There I am coming—You are to know, that our Squire Wou'd-be is violently bent upon matrimony; and nothing, forsooth, will go down but a person of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs. Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter contempt, a grand alliance is all that he wants; so

that the lady has but her veins full of high blood, he does not care two-pence how low and how empty her purse is.

Sim. But, Ma'am, won't it be difficult to meet with a suitable subject? I believe there are few ladies of quality that——

Mrs. Mech. Oh, as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed!

Mrs. Mech. You know my niece Dolly?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs. Mech. What think you of her?

Sim. Of Miss Dolly, for what?

Mrs. Mech. For what! you are plaguily dull; why, woman of fashion, you dunce.

Sim. To be sure Miss Dolly is very deserving, and few ladies have a better appearance; but, bless me, Madam, here people of rank are so generally known, that the slightest inquiry wou'd poison your project.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fears from that quarter; there, I think, I am pretty secure.

Sim. If that, indeed, be the case——

Mrs. Mech. In the first place, Mr. Fungus has an entire reliance on me.

Sim. That's something.

Mrs. Mech. Then to baffle any idle curiosity, we are not derived from any of your newfangled gentry, who owe their upstart nobility to your Harrys and Edwards. No, no, we are scions from an older stock; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal descendent, from Hercules Alexander, Earl of Glendower, prime minister to King Malcolm the First.

Sim. Odsol! a qualification for a canon of Strasburg. So then, it seems, you are transplanted from the banks of the Tweed; cry you mercy!—But how will Miss Dolly be able to manage the accent?

Mrs. Mech. Very well; she was two years an actress in Edenborough.

Sim. That's true;—is the overture made, has there been any interview?

Mrs. Mech. Several; we have no dislike to his person; can't but own he is rather agreeable; and as to his proposals, they are greater than we cou'd desire—But we are prudent and careful, say nothing without the Earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be easily had.

Mrs. Mech. Not so easily; and now comes your part: but first, how goes the world with you, Simon?

Sim. Never worse! the ten bags of tea, and the cargo of brandy, them peering rascals took from me in Sussex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon! why then I am afraid there's an end of your traffic?

Sim. Totally: for, now those fellows have got the Isle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Then you are entirely at leisure?

Sim. As a Bath turnspit in the month of July.

Mrs. Mech. You are then, Simon, an old family-servant in waiting here on the lady; but dispatched to the North with a view to negotiate the treaty, you are just returned with the noble peer's resolution,

Prepare you a suitable equipage; I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover and one for the lady.

Sim. The contents?

Mrs. Mech. Oh, you may read them within; now with regard to any questions, I will furnish you with suitable answers—but you have a bungler to deal with, so your cards will be easily play'd.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Miss Dolly, Ma'am, in a hackney coach at corner; may she come in?

Mrs. Mech. Are the servants out of the way?

Jen. Oh, she is so muffled up and disguised, that she'll run no danger from them.

Mrs. Mech. Be sure keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, Ma'am. *[Exit Jenny.]*

Mrs. Mech. Simon, take those two letters that are under the furthestmost cushion in the window: run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at farthest.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions?

Mrs. Mech. Time enough. I shall be in the way; for it is me that must introduce you above. *(Exit Simon.)* So, things seem now in a pretty good train; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me easy for life. To say truth, I begin to be tired of my trade. To be sure, the profits are great; but then,

so are the risks that I run : besides, my private practice begins to be smok'd. Ladies are suppos'd to come here with different designs than merely to look at my goods : some of my best customers, too, are got out of my channel, and manage their matters at home by their maids. Those asylums, they give a dreadful blow to my business. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, I could supply him with choice in an hour ; but the market is spoil'd, and a body might as soon produce a hare or a partridge as a pretty—(*Enter Dolly.*)—So, niece, are all things prepar'd ; have you got the papers from Harpy ?

Dol. Here they are, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Let me see—Oh the marriage-articles for Fungus to sign. Have you got the contract about you ?

Dol. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs. Mech. True, I had forgot : but where is the bond that I—Here it is ; this, Dolly, you must sign and seal before witnesses.

Dol. To what end, aunt ?

Mrs. Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgment for all the trouble I have taken ; a little hint to your husband, that he may reimburse your poor aunt, for your cloaths, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dol. I hope my aunt does not suspect that I can ever be wanting—

Mrs. Mech. No, my dear, not in the least ; but it is best, Dolly, in order to prevent all retrospection,

that we settle accounts before you change your condition.

Dol. But, Ma'am, may not I see the contents?

Mrs. Mech. The contents, love! of what use will that be to you? Sign and seal, that's enough.

Dol. But, aunt, I choose to see what I sign.

Mrs. Mech. To see! what, then you suspect me?

Dol. No, Ma'am; but a little caution——

Mrs. Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! how dare you dispute my commands? have not I made you, raised you from nothing, and won't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dol. Madam, I——

Mrs. Mech. Answer me, hussey, was not you a beggar's brat at my door; did I not, out of compassion, take you into my house, call you my niece, and give you suitable breeding?

Dol. True, Madam.

Mrs. Mech. And what return did you make me? You was scarce got into your teens, you forward slut, but you brought me a child almost as big as yourself; and a delightful father you chose for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre musician; that sick monkey-face maker of crotchets; that eternal trotter after all the little draggle-tail'd girls of the town. Oh, you low slut, had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vex'd me; but a fidler!——

Dol. For Heaven's sake——

Mrs. Mech. After that you elop'd, commenced stroller, and in a couple of years return'd to town in your original trim with scarce a rag to your back.

Dol. Pray, Ma'am——

Mrs. Mech. Did not I, notwithstanding, receive you again? have not I tortured my brains for your good? found you a husband as rich as a Jew, just brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuse to sign a paltry paper?

Dol. Pray, Madam, give it me, I will sign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs. Mech. You will; yes, so you had best. And what's become of the child, have you done as I order'd?

Dol. The Doctor was not at home; but the nurse left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs. Mech. You heard nothing from him?

Dol. Not a word.

Mrs. Mech. Then he is meditating some mischief, I warrant. However, let our good stars secure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky, though, that Mr. Fungus has chosen the Doctor for his master of music; but as yet he has not been here, and, if possible, we must prevent him.

Enter JENNY hastily.

Jen. Mr. Fungus the tallow-chandler, Ma'am, is crossing the way; shall I say you are at home?

Mrs. Mech. His brother hath servants enough, let some of them answer. Hide, Dolly. (*Exit Dolly and Jenny.*)—(*One knocks at the door.*) Ay, that's the true tap of the trader: this old brother of ours, tho', is smoky and shrewd, and, tho' an odd, a sensible fellow;—we must guard against him: if he

gets but an inkling, but the slightest suspicion, our project is marr'd.—(*A noise without.*) What the deuce is the matter? As I live, a squabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hir'd this morning. This may make mirth, I'll listen a little.

[*Retires.*]

Enter MR. ISAAC FUNGUS, driving in LA FLEUR.

I. Fun. What, is there nobody in the house that can give me an answer? where's my brother, you rascal?

La Fleur. *Je n'etend pas.*

I. Fun. Pas! what the devil is that?—Answer yes or no, is my brother at home? don't shrug up your shoulders at me, you——Oh, here comes a rational being.

Enter MRS. MÉCHLIN.

Madam Mechlin, how fares it? this here lanthorn-jaw'd rascal won't give me an answer, and indeed wou'd scarce let me into the house.

La Fleur. *C'est gros bourgeois a fait une tapage de diable.*

Mrs. Mech. *Fy donc c'est le frere de Monsieur.*

La Fleur. *Le Frere! mon Dieu!*

I. Fun. What is all this? what the devil lingo is the fellow a-talking?

Mrs. Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fun. From France! and is that the best of his breeding? I thought we had taught them better

manners abroad, than to come here and insult us at home. People make such a rout about smuggling their frenchified goods; their men do us more mischief. If we could but hinder the importing of them——

Mrs. Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton; I see that, Mr. Isaac.

I. Fun. I warrant me: is brother Zachary at home?

Mrs. Mech. Above stairs, Sir.

I. Fun. Any company with him?

Mrs. Mech. Not any to hinder your visit. *La Fleur*, ouvrez le porte.

I. Fun. Get along you——*Mrs. Mechlin*, your servant. (*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*) I can't think what the devil makes your quality so fond of the *Monsieurs*; for my part, I don't see——March and be hang'd to you—you sooty-fac'd——

[*Exit I. Fungus and La Fleur**.]

Mrs. Mech. Come, Dolly, you may now appear.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Mr. Paduasoy, Ma'am, the Spitalfields weaver; he has been waiting this hour, and says he has some people at home——

Mrs. Mech. Let him enter; in a couple of minutes I'll follow you, Dolly. [*Exit Jenny.*]

Enter PADUASOY.

Mrs. Mech. Mr. Paduasoy, you may load your

* First act ends here, when done as an after-piece.

‘ self home with those silks, they won’t do for my
‘ market.

‘ *Pad.* Why, what’s the matter, Madam?

‘ *Mrs. Mech.* Matter! you are a pretty fellow in-
‘ deed! you are a tradesman! ’tis lucky I know
‘ you, things might have been worse; let us settle
‘ accounts, Mr. Paduasoy; you’ll see no more of
‘ my money.

‘ *Pad.* I shall be sorry for that, Mrs. Mechlin.

‘ *Mrs. Mech.* Sorry! answer me one question: Am
‘ not I the best customer that you ever had?

‘ *Pad.* I confess it.

‘ *Mrs. Mech.* Have I not mortgaged my precious
‘ soul, by swearing to my quality-customers that
‘ the stuff from your looms was the produce of
‘ Lyons?

‘ *Pad.* Granted.

‘ *Mrs. Mech.* And unless that had been believ’d,
‘ could you have sold them a yard, nay a nail?

‘ *Pad.* I believe not.

‘ *Mrs. Mech.* Very well. Did not, Sir, I procure
‘ you more money for your curs’d goods, when sold
‘ as the manufacture of France, than as mere Eng-
‘ lish they could have ever produced you?

‘ *Pad.* I never deny’d it.

‘ *Mrs. Mech.* Then are not you a pretty fellow,
‘ to blow up and ruin my reputation at once?

‘ *Pad.* Me, Madam.

‘ *Mrs. Mech.* Yes, you.

‘ *Pad.* As how?

Mrs. Mech. ‘ Did not you tell me these pieces of

' silk were entire, and the only ones you had made
' of that pattern ?

' *Pad.* I did.

' *Mrs. Mech.* Now mind. Last Monday I left
' them as just landed, upon a pretence to secure
' them from seizure, at the old countess of Furbe-
' low's, by whose means I was sure, at my own
' price, to get rid of them both ; and who should
' come in last night at the ball at the Mansion-
' house, where my lady unluckily happen'd to be,
' with a full suit of the blue pattern upon her back,
' but Mrs. Deputy Dowlass, dizen'd out like a du-
' chess.

' *Pad.* Mrs. Deputy Dowlass ! Is it possible ?

' *Mrs. Mech.* There is no denying the fact : but
' that was not all. If, indeed, Mrs. Deputy had
' behaved like a gentlewoman, and swore they had
' been sent her from Paris, why there the thing
' would have died : but see what it is to have to do
' with mechanics ; the fool owned she had them
' from you. I should be glad to see any of my cus-
' tomers at a loss for a lie ; but those trumpery
' traders, Mr. Paduasoy, you'll never gain any cre-
' dit by them.

' *Pad.* This must be a trick of my wife's ; I know
' the women are intimate ; but this piece of intelli-
' gence will make a hot house. None of my fault,
' indeed, Mrs. Mechlin ; I hope, Ma'am, this
' won't make any difference ?

' *Mrs. Mech.* Difference ! I don't believe I shall

' be able to smuggle a gown for you these six months. What is in that bundle ?

' *Pad.* Some India handkerchiefs, that you promised to procure of a supercargo at Woolwich for Sir Thomas Calico's lady.

' *Mrs. Mech.* Are you pretty forward with the light sprigg'd waistcoats from Italy ?

' *Pad.* They will be out of the loom in a week.

' *Mrs. Mech.* You need not put any Genoa velvets in hand till the end of autumn ; but you may make me immediately a fresh sortiment of foreign ribbons for summer.

' *Pad.* Any other commands, Mrs. Mechlin ?

' *Mrs. Mech.* Not at present, I think.

' *Pad.* I wish you, Madam, a very good morning.

' *Mrs. Mech.* Mr. Paduasoy ! Lord, I had lik'd to have forget. You must write an anonymous letter to the custom-house, and send me some old silks to be seized ; I must treat the town with a bonfire : it will make a fine paragraph for the papers, and at the same time advertise the public where such things may be had.

' *Pad.* I shan't fail, Madam. [*Exit Paduasoy.*]

' *Mrs. Mech.* Who says now that I am not a friend to my country ? I think the Society for the Encouragement of Arts should vote me a premium. I am sure I am one of the greatest encouragers of our own manufactures. [*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

*Enter ZACHARY FUNGUS, ISAAC FUNGUS, and
Mrs. MECHLIN.*

Zac. Fungus.

BROTHER Isaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But first answer me this: Can knowledge do a man any harm?

I. Fun. No, sartin'; what is befitting a man for to learn?

Z. Fun. To learn! and how should you know what is befitting a gentleman to learn? stick to your trade, master tallow-chandler.

I. Fun. Now, brother Zachary, can you say in your conscience, as how it is decent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almost lost the use of your legs.

Z. Fun. Lost the use of my legs! to see but the malice of men! Do but ax Mrs. Mechlin; now, Ma'am, does not Mrs. Dukes say, that, considering my time, I have made a wonderful progress?

I. Fun. Your time, brother Zac?

Z. Fun. Ay, my time, brother Isaac. Why, I ha'n't been at it passing a couple of months; and we have at our school two aldermen and a serjeant at law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs. Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. There now, Mrs. Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, Ma'am, does not Master allow, that, of my age, I am the most hopeful scholar he has?

Mrs. Mech. I can't but say, Mr. Isaac, that the squire has made a most prodigious improvement.

Z. Fun. Do you hear that? I wish we had but a kit, I would show you what I could do: one, two, three, ha. One, two, three, ha. There are risings and sinkings!

Mrs. Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

Z. Fun. A'n't it! Why, before next winter is over, he says he'll fit me for dancing in public; and who knows but in Lent you may see me amble at a ridotto with an opera-singer.

Mrs. Mech. And I warrant he acquits himself as well as the best.

I. Fun. Mercy on me! and pray, brother, that thing like a sword in your hand, what may the use of that implement be?

Z. Fun. This? oh, this is a foil.

I. Fun. A foil?

Z. Fun. Ay, a little instrument, by which we who are gentlemen are instructed to kill one another.

I. Fun. To kill! Marry, heaven forbid; I hope you have no such bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac. you was used to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fun. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic, and afraid of the law: but now I am another-guess person; I have been in camps, cantoons, and intrenchments; I have marched over bridges and breaches; I have seen the Ezell and Wezell; I'm

got as rich as a jew ; and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fun. Rich as a jew ! Ah, Zac, Zac ! but if you had not had another-guess trade than fighting, I doubt whether you would have returned altogether so rich : but now you have got all this wealth, why not sit down and enjoy it in quiet ?

Z. Fun. Hark ye, Isaac, do you purtend to know life ? are you acquainted with the beaux d'espirts of the age ?

I. Fun. I don't understand you.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not ; then how should you know what belongs to gentility ?

I. Fun. And why not as well as you, brother Zac ? I hope I am every whit as well born.

Z. Fun. Ay, Isaac, but the breeding is all : consider I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think should know a little what belongs to the business ; hey, Mrs. Mechlin ?

Mrs. Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. And as to this foil, do you know, Isaac, in what the art of fencing consists ?

I. Fun. How should I ?

Z. Fun. Why, it is short ; there are but two rules : the first is to give your antagonist as many thrusts as you can ; the second, to be caraeiful and receive none yourself.

I. Fun. But how is this to be done ?

Z. Fun. Oh, easy enough : for, do you see, if you can but divert your adversary's point from the line

of your body, it is impossible he ever should hit you ; and all this is done by a little turn of the wrist, either this way, or that way. But I'll show you: John, bring me a foil. Mrs. Mechlin, it will be worth your observing. Here, brother Isaac—

[Offers him a foil.

I. Fun. Not I.

Z. Fun. These bourgeois are so frightful. Mrs. Mechlin, will you, Ma'am, do me the favour to push at me, a little? Mind, brother, when she thrusts at me in carte, I do so; and when she pushes in tierce, I do so; and by this means a man is sure to avoid being killed. But it may not be amiss, brother Isaac, to give you the progress of a regular quarrel; and then you will see what sort of a thing a gentlemen is. Now I have been told, d'ye see, brother Isaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that Captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you please, has in public company call'd me a cuckold—

I. Fun. A cuckold! But how can that be? because why, brother Zac. you ben't married.

Z. Fun. But as I am just going to be marry'd, that may very well happen, you know.

Mrs. Mech. True.

Z. Fun. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the Captain has said I am a cuckold. Upon which, the first time I set eyes on Captain Wilkins, either at Vauxhall or at Ranelagh, I accost him in a courteous, genteel-like manner.

I. Fun. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fun. Your patience, dear Isaac—in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; Captain Hopkins, your servant.

I. Fun. Why, you call'd him but now, Captain Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Psha! you blockhead, I tell you the name does not signify nothing—Your servant; shall I crave your ear for a moment? The Captain politely replies, Your commands, good Mr. Fungus? Then we walk side by side—come here, Mrs. Mechlin—(*They walk up and down.*) for some time as civil as can be. Mind, brother Isaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fun. Hey!—no, t'other side, Mrs. Mechlin—that's right—I hear, Captain Wilkins—

I. Fun. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Zounds! Isaac, be quiet—Wilkins, that you have taken some liberties about and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't understand—

I. Fun. Don't swear, brother Zachary.

Z. Fun. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow.

I. Fun. But you are grown such a reprobate since you went to the wars—

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, stop the tongue of that blockhead; why, dunce, I am speaking by rule, and Mrs. Mechlin can tell you that duels and damme's go always together.

Mrs. Mech. O always.

Z. Fun. Which, damme, I don't understand, Liberties with you, cries the Captain; where, when, and in what manner? Last Friday night, in company at the St. Alban's, you call'd me a buck; and more—

over said, that my horns were exalted. Now, Sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand satisfaction. That, Sir, is what I never deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr. Fungus, I can't consent to give you that rank. How, Sir! do you deny my gentility? Oh, that affront must be answered this instant—Draw, Sir. Now push, Mrs. Mechlin. (*They fence.*) There, I parry tierce, there I parry carte, there I parry—Hold, hold, have a care, zooks! Mrs. Mechlin.

I. Fun. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match; well push'd, Mrs. Mechlin.

Z. Fun. Ay, but instead of pushing in tierce, she push'd me in carte, and came so thick with her thrusts, that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fun. Well, well, I am fully convinc'd of your skill; but I think, brother Zac. you hinted an intention of marrying; is that your design?

Z. Fun. Undoubtedly.

I. Fun. And when?

Z. Fun. Why, this evening.

I. Fun. So sudden! and pray, is it a secret; to whom?

Z. Fun. A secret, no; I am proud of the match; she brings me all that I want, her veins full of good blood; such a family! such an alliance! zooks, she has a pedigree as long as the Mall, brother Isaac, with large trees on each side, and all the boughs loaded with lords.

I. Fun. But has the lady no name?

Z. Fun. Name! ay, such a name, Lord, we have nothing like it in London: none of your stunted

little dwarfish words of one syllable; your Watts, and your Potts, and your Trotts; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad wheels. Mrs. Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs. Mech. Lady Sacharissa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fun. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of syllables for you. Lineally descended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm the first.

I. Fun. And are all the parties agreed?

Z. Fun. I can't say quite all; for the right honourable peer that is to be my papa, (who by the by is as proud as the devil) has flatly renounc'd the alliance; calls me here in his letter Plebeian; and says, if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pyebalds.

I. Fun. And what does the gentlewoman say?

Z. Fun. The gentlewoman! Oh, the gentlewoman, who (between ourselves) is pretty near as high as her father; but, however, my person has prov'd too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fun. It is resolv'd?

Z. Fun. Fix'd.

I. Fun. I am sorry for it.

Z. Fun. Why so? come, come, brother Isaac, don't be uneasy, I have a shrewd guess at your grievance; but though you may not be suffer'd to see lady Scracarissa at first, yet who knows before long I may have interest enough with her to bring it about; and in the mean time you may dine when you will with the steward.

I. Fun. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainsay it?

Mrs. Mech. By no means; it is wonderful, considering her rank, how mild and condescending she is: why, but yesterday, says her ladyship to me, Though Mrs. Mechlin, it can't be suppos'd that I should admit any of the Fungus family into my presence——

Z. Fun. No, no, to be sure; not at first, as I said.

Mrs. Mech. Yet his brother, or any other relation, may dine with the servants every day.

Z. Fun. Do you hear, Isaac? there's your true, inherent nobility, so humble and affable; but people of real rank never have any pride; that is only for upstarts.

I. Fun. Wonderfully gracious: but here, brother Zac, you mistake me; it is not for myself I am sorry.

Z. Fun. Whom then?

I. Fun. For you. Don't you think that your wife will despise you?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you suppose that you will live together a month?

Z. Fun. Yes.

I. Fun. Why, can you bear to walk about your own house like a paltry dependant?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To have yourself and your orders contemn'd by your servants?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To see your property devour'd by your lady's beggarly cousins, who, notwithstanding, won't vouchsafe you a nod? —

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her sending, come at her calling, dine by yourself when she has bettermost company, and sleep six nights a-week in the garret?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Why, will you dare to disobey, have the impudence to dispute the sovereign will and pleasure of a lady like her?

Z. Fun. Ay, marry will I.

I. Fun. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraros, with their naked points at your throat?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fun. Look you, brother, I know what you would be at; you don't mean I shou'd marry at all.

I. Fun. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I shou'd with pleasure see you equally match'd, that is to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fun. You wou'd? I don't doubt it; but that is a pleasure you never will have. Look you, Isaac, I have made up my mind; it is a lady I like, and a lady I will have; and if you say any more, I'll not be contented with that, for damme I'll marry a duchess.

Enter LA FLEUR.

La Fleur. Le Maître pour donner d'eloquence.

Z. Fun. What does the puppy say, Mrs. Mechlin? for you know I can't parler vous.

Mrs. Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a speaker.

Z. Fun. Odzooks! a special fine fellow; let's have him.

Mrs. Mech. Faites les entres. [*Exit La Fleur.*

I. Fun. Brother, as you are busy, I will take another—

Z. Fun. No, no, this is the finest fellow of all; it is he that is to make me a man; and hark ye, brother, if I should chance to rise in the state, no more words, your business is done.

I. Fun. What, I reckon some member of parliament?

Z. Fun. A member! Lord help you, brother Isaac, this man is a whole senate himself. Why, it is the famous orationer that has publish'd the book.

I. Fun. What, Mr. Gruel?

Z. Fun. The same.

I. Fun. Yes, I have seen his name in the news.

Z. Fun. His knowledge is wonderful; he has told me such secrets: why, do you know, Isaac, by what means 'tis we speak?

I. Fun. Speak! why, we speak with our mouths.

Z. Fun. No, we don't.

I. Fun. No!

Z. Fun. No. He says we speak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat; and without them we only should bellow.

I. Fun. But surely the mouth—

Z. Fun. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing; only just a cavity for the air to pass through.

I. Fun. Indeed!

Z. Fun. That's all; and when the cavity is small, little sounds will come out; when large, the great one's proceed: observe now in whistling and bawling—(*Whistles and bawls.*)—Do you see? Oh, he is a miraculous man!

I. Fun. But of what use is all this?

Z. Fun. But 'tis knowledge, an't it? and of what signification is that, you fool? And then as to use, why, he can make me speak in any manner he pleases; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the subject requires—But here he is.

Enter Mr. GRUEL.

Mr. Gruel, your servant; I have been holding forth in your praise.

Gruel. I make no doubt, Mr. Fungus; but to your declamation, or recitation (as Quintilian more properly terms it), I shall be indebted for much future praise, in as much as the reputation of the scholar does (as I may say) confer, or rather as it were reflect a marvellous kind of lustre on the fame of the master himself.

Z. Fun. There, Isaac, didst ever hear the like?

E

he talks just as if it were all out of a book: What wou'd you give to be able to utter such words?

I. Fun. And what shou'd I do with them? them holiday terms wou'd not pass in my shop; there's no buying and selling with them.

Grue. Your observation is pithy and pertinent. Different stations different idioms demand; polished periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baser kind of coin, for the ease and convenience of inferior traffic, so it is indulg'd with a vernacular or vitious vulgar phraseology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce. But I doubt, Sir, I soar above the region of your comprehension?

I. Fun. Why, if you would come down a step or two, I can't say but I shou'd understand you the better.

Z. Fun. And I too.

Grue. Then to the familiar I fall: if the gentleman has any ambition to shine at a vestry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can supply him with ample materials.

I. Fun. No, I have no such desire.

Grue. Not to lose time; your brother here, (for such I find the gentleman is), in other respects a common man like yourself—

Z. Fun. No better.

Grue. Observe how alter'd by means of my art: are you prepar'd in the speech on the great importance of trade?

Z. Fun. Pretty well, I believe.

Act II.

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Gruel. Let your gesticulations be chaste, and your muscular movements consistent.

Z. Fun. Never fear——

Enter JENNY, and whispers Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mechlin, you'll stay.

Mrs. Mech. A little business; I'll return in an instant.

[*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you please, Sir; there you will only catch his profile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face; one, two, three; now off you go.

Z. Fun. When I consider the vast importance of this day's debate; when I revolve the various vicissitudes that this soil has sustain'd; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were, and what we their civilized successors are: when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and chesnuts——

Gruel. Pignuts, good Sir, if you please.

Z. Fun. You are right; crab-apples and pig-nuts; and that we feast on green-pease and on custards: when I trace in the recording historical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now know we have fish by land-carriage, I am lost in amazement at the prodigious power of commerce. Hail, Commerce! daughter of industry, consort to credit, parent of opulence; full sister to liberty, and great-grandmother to the art of navigation——

I. Fun. Why, this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac.

Z. Fun. Prithee, Isaac, be quiet—art of navigati-

on—a—a—vigitation——Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out.

Gruel. It matters not; this day's performance has largely fulfill'd your yesterday's promise.

Z. Fun. But I han't half done, the best is to come; let me just give him that part about turnpegs—For the sloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impassable bogs, that the languid but generous steed travel'd through; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole region of turnpegs.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Your riding-master is below.

Z. Fun. Gadso! then here we must end. You'll pardon me, good Mr. Gruel; for as I want to be a finished gentleman as soon as I can, it is impossible for me to stick long to any one thing.

Gruel. Sir, though your exit is rather abrupt, yet the multiplicity of your avocations do (as I may say) in some measure cicatrize the otherwise mortal wound on this occasion sustained by decorum.

Z. Fun. Cicatrize! I could hear him all day. He is a wonderful man. Well, Mr. Gruel, to-morrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your slightest volition.

Z. Fun. I wish, brother Isaac, I could have staid; you should have heard me oration away, like a lawyer, about pleadings and presidents; but all in good time.

[*Exit Z. Fungus.*]

Mrs. Mech. This gentleman, Sir, will gain you vast credit.

Gruel. Yes, Mu'am, the capabilities of the gentleman, I confess, are enormous; and, as to you I am indebted for this promising pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation by an instantaneous and gratis lecture on that species of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Sir, I have no sort of occasion—

Gruel. As to that biped, man, (for such I define him to be), a male or masculine manner belongs—

Mrs. Mech. Any other time, good Mr. Gruel.

Gruel. So to that biped, woman, she participating of his general nature, the word *homo* in Latin being promiscuously used as woman or man—

Mrs. Mech. For heav'n's sake.

Gruel. But being cast in a more tender and delicate mold—

Mrs. Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting—

Gruel. The soft, suppliant, insinuating graces—

Mrs. Mech. I must insist—

Gruel. Do appertain (as I may say) in a more peculiar or more particular manner—

Mrs. Mech. Nay then—

Gruel. Her rank in the order of entities—

Mrs. Mech. I must thrust you out of my house.

Gruel. Not calling her forth—

Mrs. Mech. Was there ever such a—

(Pushing him out.)

Re-enter GRUEL.

Gruel. To those eminent, hazardous, and (as I may say) perilous conflicts, which so often—

Mrs. Mech. Get down stairs, and be hang'd to you. (*Pushes him out.*) There he goes, as I live, from the top to the bottom; I hope I han't done him a mischief: You ar'n't hurt, Mr. Gruel?—No, all's safe; I hear him going on with his speech; an impertinent puppy!

I. Fun. Impertinent indeed; I wonder all those people don't turn your head, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, I am pretty well us'd to 'em. But who comes here? Mr. Isaac, if you will step into the next room, I have something to communicate that well deserves your attention.

[*Exit Isaac Fungus.*

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Dr. Catgut at the foot of the stairs.

Mrs. Mech. The devil he is! What can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up whilst he is here. (*Exit Simon.*) I hope he has not heard of the pretty present we sent him to-day.

Enter DR. CATGUT.

Dr. Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, Ma'am, received a couple of compliments from your mansion this morning; one I find from a lodger of yours; the other, I presume, from your

nièce; but for the last, I rather suppose I am indebted to you.

Mrs. Mech. Me! Indeed, Doctor, you are widely mistaken: I assure you, Sir, since your business broke out, I have never set eyes of her once.

Dr. Cat. Then I am falsely informed.

Mrs. Mech. But, after all, you must own it is but what you deserve: I wonder, Doctor, you don't leave off these tricks.

Dr. Cat. Why, what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? my constitution requires it.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed! I should not have thought it.

Dr. Cat. Then the dear little devils are so desperately fond.

Mrs. Mech. Without doubt.

Dr. Cat. And for frolic, flirtation; diligence, dress, and address——

Mrs. Mech. To be sure.

Dr. Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry, few men, I flatter myself, will be found that can match me.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr. Cat. Hark ye, Molly Mechlin; let me pe-
rish, child, you look divinely to-day.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed!

Dr. Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I should be positively tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, but, Doctor, consider I am not of a trifling age; it would be only losing your time.

Dr. Cat. Ha, so coy!——But a-propos, Molly,

this lodger of yours ; who is he, and what does he want ?

Mrs. Mech. You have heard of the great Mr. Fungus ?

Dr. Cat. Well !

Mrs. Mech. Being informed of your skill and abilities, he has sent for you to teach him to sing.

Dr. Cat. Me teach him to sing !——What does the scoundrel mean to affront me ?

Mrs. Mech. Affront you !

Dr. Cat. Why, don't you know, child, that I quitted that paltry profession ?

Mrs. Mech. Not I.

Dr. Cat. Oh, entirely renounced it.

Mrs. Mech. Then what may you follow at present ?

Dr. Cat. Me !——nothing ; I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs. Mech. A poet !

Dr. Cat. A poet. The muses ; you know I was always fond of the ladies : I suppose you have heard of Shakespeare, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of Milton and Hudibras ?

Mrs. Mech. I have.

Dr. Cat. I shall blast all their laurels, by gad ; I have just given the public a taste, but there's a belly-full for them in my larder at home.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, you surprise me ; but pray, is poetry a trade to be learn'd ?

Dr. Cat. Doubtless. Capital as I am, I have not acquired it above a couple of years.

Mrs. Mech. And cou'd you communicate your art to another ?

Dr. Cat. To be sure. Why I have here in my pocket, my dear, a whole folio of rhimes, from Z quite to great A. Let us see; A, ay, here it begins, A, ass, pass, grass, mass, lass; and so quite through the alphabet down to Z. Zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs. Mech. And what do you do with those rhimes?

Dr. Cat. Oh, we supply them.

Mrs. Mech. Supply them?

Dr. Cat. Ay, fill them up, as I will show you. Last week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made these rhimes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the stocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that sort of writing.—First, *she*:

There to see the sluggish ass,
Thro' the meadows as we pass,
Eating up the farmer's grass,
Blyth and merry, by the mass,
As a lively country lass.

Mrs. Mech. Very pretty.

Dr. Cat. A'n't it? Then *he* replies:

Hear the farmer cry out, Zounds!
As he trudges through the grounds,
Yonder beast hath broke my mounds;
If the parish has no pounds,
Kill, and give him to the hounds.

Then da Capo, both join in repeating the last stanza; and this, tack'd to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You observe?

Mrs. Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is desirous

to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr. Cat. In that case, he may command me, my dear; and I promise you, in a couple of months, he shall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs. Mech. At present he is a little engaged; but as soon as the honey-moon is over——

Dr. Cat. Honey-moon! Why, is he going to be marry'd?

Mrs. Mech. This evening, I fancy.

Dr. Cat. The finest opportunity in nature for an introduction: I have by me, Ma'am Mechlin, of my own composition, such an epithalmium.

Mrs. Mech. Thalium, what's that?

Dr. Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compose at the solemnization of weddings.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, ho!

Dr. Cat. It is set to music already, for I still compose for myself.

Mrs. Mech. You do?

Dr. Cat. What think you now of providing a band, and serenading the 'Squire to-night? It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs. Mech. The prettiest thought in the world. But I hear Mr. Fungus's bell. You'll excuse me, dear Doctor, you may suppose we are busy.

Dr. Cat. No apology then; I'll about it this instant.

Mrs. Mech. As soon as you please. Any thing to get you out of the way. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Dr. Cat. Your obsequious, good Madam Mechlin.

But notwithstanding all your fine speeches, I shrewdly suspect my blessed bargain at home was a present from you; and what shall I do with it?—These little embarrasses we men of intrigue are eternally subject to.—There will be no sending it back; she will never let it enter the house.—Hey, gad, a lucky thought is come into my head—this serenade is finely contrived—Madam Mechlin shall have her cousin again, for I will return her bye-blow in the body of a double base viol; so the bawd shall have a concert as well as the 'Squire.— [*Exit Dr. Catgut.*]

THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

Enter HARPY, YOUNG LOVEIT, and JENNY.

Harpy.

TELL your mistress my name is *Harpy*; she knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr. Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn?

Har. The same. (*Exit Jenny*) 'Ay, ay, young gentleman, this is your woman; I warrant your business is done. You knew Kitty Williams, that marry'd Mr. Abednigo Potiphar, the Jew broker?'

'*Y. Lov.* I did.

'*Har.* And Robin Rainbow, the happy husband of the widow Champansy, from the isle of St. Kitts?

'*Y. Lov.* I have seen him.

'*Har.* All owing to her. Her success in that branch of business is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, since last summer, she has not sent off less than forty couple to Edinburgh.

'*Y. Lov.* Indeed! She must be very adroit.

'*Har.* Adroit! You shall judge. I will tell you a case: You know the large brick-house at Peckham, with a turret at top?

'*Y. Lov.* Well.

'*Har.* There liv'd Miss Cicely Mite, the only daughter of old Mite the cheesemonger, at the corner of Newgate-street, just turn'd of fourteen,

‘ and under the wing of an old maiden aunt as watch-
ful as a dragon—but hush—I hear Mrs. Mechlin,
‘ I’ll take another season to finish my tale.’

Y. Lov. But, Mr Harpy, as these kind of women are a good deal given to ‘gossiping, I wou’d rather my real name was a secret till there is a sort of necessity.

Har. Gossiping! She, Lord help you, she is as close as a Catholic confessor.

Y. Lov. That may be; but you must give me leave to insist.

Har. Well, well, as you please.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Your very humble servant, good Madam Mechlin; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your assistance.

Mrs. Mech. Any friend of yours, Mr. Harpy;—won’t you be seated, Sir?

Y. Lov. Ma’am?

[*They sit down.*]

Mrs. Mech. And pray, Sir, how can I serve you?

Har. Why, Ma’am, the gentleman’s situation is—But, Sir, you had better state your case to Mrs. Mechlin yourself.

Y. Lov. Why, you are to know, Ma’am, that I am just escap’d from the university, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly esteem’d.

Mrs. Mech. Very obliging! I must own, Sir, I have had a very great respect for that learned body ever since they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of music.

Y. Lov. Yes, Ma'am, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. Do you know him, Sir? I expect him here every minute to instruct a lodger of mine.

Y. Lov. Not intimately. Just arriv'd, but last night; upon my coming to town, I found my father deceased, and all his fortune devis'd to his relict, my mother.

Mrs. Mech. What, the whole?

Y. Lov. Every shilling. That is, for her life.

Mrs. Mech. And to what sum may it amount?

Y. Lov. My mother is eternally telling me, that after her I shall inherit fifty or sixty thousand at least.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, a capital sum.

Y. Lov. But of what use, my dear Mrs. Mechlin, since she refuses to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it; and while the grass grows—You know the proverb—

Mrs. Mech. What, I suppose you want something for present subsistence?

Y. Lov. Just my situation.

Mrs. Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourself?

Y. Lov. I am resolved to be guided by you.

Mrs. Mech. What do you think of a wife?

Y. Lov. A wife!

Mrs. Mech. Come, come, don't despise my advice: when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better resource than a usurer; and there are in this town a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleasure in repairing the injuries done by Fortune to handsome young fellows,

Har. Mrs. Mechlin has reason.

Y. Lov. But, dear Ma'am, what can I do with a wife?

Mrs. Mech. Do!—Why, like other young fellows who marry ladies a little stricken in years; make her your banker and steward. If you say but the word, before night, I'll give you a widow with two thousand a-year in her pocket.

Y. Lov. Two thousand a-year! a pretty employment, if the residence cou'd but be dispens'd with.

Mrs. Mech. What do you mean by residence? Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful trader, is to be eternally tack'd to his wife's petticoat? When she is in town, be you in the country; as she shifts do you shift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year; and, let me tell you, you won't find a more easy condition; twelve months subsistence for one month's labour.

Y. Lov. Two thousand a-year, you are sure?

Mrs. Mech. The least penny.

Y. Lov. Well, Madam, you shall dispose of me just as you please.

Mrs. Mech. Very well; if you'll call in half an hour at farthest, I believe we shall finish the business.

Y. Lov. In half an hour?

Mrs. Mech. Precisely. Oh, dispatch is the very life and soul of my trade. Mr. Harpy will tell you my terms: You will find them reasonable enough.

Har. Oh, I am sure we shall have no dispute about those.

Y. Lov. No, no.—

[*Going.*

Mrs. Mech. Oh, but, Mr. Harpy, it may be proper to mention that the gentlewoman, the party, is upwards of sixty.

Y. Lov. With all my heart; it is the purse, not the person, I want. Sixty! she is quite a girl; I wish with all my soul she was ninety.

Mrs. Mech. Get you gone, you are a devil, I see that.

Y. Lov. Well, for half an hour, sweet Mrs. Mechlin, adieu. [*Exeunt Young Lovell and Harpy.*

Mrs. Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonshire-square; and now to cater for my commissary. Here he comes.

Enter FUNGUS and BRIDOUN.

Fun. So, in six weeks—Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs. Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conscious that in this step she descends from her dignity; but being desirous to screen you from the fury of her noble relations, she is determined to let them see that the act and deed is entirely her own.

Fun. Very kind, very obliging, indeed!—But, Mrs. Mechlin, as the family is so furious, I reckon we shall never be reconcil'd.

Mrs. Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought commissions for her three younger brothers, discharged the mortgage on the paternal estate, and portioned off eight or nine of her sisters, it is not impossible but my Lord may be prevailed on to suffer your name—

Fun. Do you think so?

Mrs. Mech. But then a work of time, Mr. Fungus.

Fun. Ay, ay; I know very well, things of that kind are not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. But I must prepare matters for the lady's reception.

Fun. By all means. The jewels are sent to her ladyship.

Mrs. Mech. To be sure.

Fun. And the ring for her ladyship, and her ladyship's licence?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyship's parson too; all are prepar'd.

Fun. Parson! why, won't her ladyship please to be marry'd at Powl's?

Mrs. Mech. Lord, Mr. Fungus, do you think a lady of her rank and condition would bear to be seen in public at once with a person like you?

Fun. That's true, I——

Mrs. Mech. No, no; I have sent to Dr. Tickle-text, and the business will be done in the parlour below.

Fun. As you and her ladyship pleases, good Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. You will get dress'd as soon as you can.

Fun. I shall only take a short lesson from Mr. Bridoun, and then wait her ladyship's pleasure.—
Mrs. Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, provided his being so is kept a secret from her.

Fun. Never fear. (*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*)—Well, Mr. Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little?

Brid. A great deal.

Fun. And that in a month or six weeks I may be able to prance upon a long-tail'd horse in Hyde-park, without any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fun. It will be vast pleasant, in the heat of the day, to canter along the King's-road, side by side with the ladies, in the thick of the dust; but that I must not hope for this summer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it close.

Fun. Never fear, I shan't be sparing of—But come, come, let us get to our business—John, have the carpenters brought home my new horse?

Enter JOHN.

John. It is here, Sir, upon the top of the stairs.

Fun. Then fetch it in, in an instant. (*Exit John.*) What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr. Bridoun, to the making a gentlemen. And do your gentlemen-born now (for I reckon you have had of all sorts) take as much pains as we do?

Brid. To be sure; but they begin at an earlier age.

Fun. There is something in that; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuterer, now in catching their larning.

Brid. Dispositions do certainly differ.

Fun. Ay, ay, something in nater, I warrant; as they say the children of blackamoors will swim as soon as they come into the world.

Enter SERVANTS with a wooden horse.

Oh, here he is. Ods me! it is a stately fine beast.

Brid. Here, my lads, place it here—Very well. Where's your switch, Mr. Fungus?

Fun. I have it.

Brid. Now, let me see you vault nimbly into your seat. Zounds! you are got on the wrong side, Mr. Fungus.

Fun. I am so indeed; but we'll soon rectify that. Now we are right; may I have leave to lay hold of the mane?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fun. I will try; but this steed is so devilish tall—Mr. Bridoun, you don't think he'll throw me?

Brid. Never fear.

Fun. Well, if he shou'd, he can't kick; that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now mind your position.

Fun. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fun. There.

Brid. And your shoulders fall easily back.

Fun. Ho——there.

Brid. Your switch perpendicular in your right hand—your right——that is it: your left to the bridle.

Fun. There.

Brid. Your knees in, and your toes out.

Fun. There.

Brid. Are you ready?

Fun. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fun. Don't let him gallop at first.

Brid. Very well : preserve your position.

Fun. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you easy ?

Fun. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr. Bridoun, I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fun. Ay, ay ; I can't think but this here horse stands still very near as fast as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fun. Ho, stop the horse : Zounds ! I'm out of the stirrups, I can't sit him no longer ; there I go——

[*Falls off.*]

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt ?

Fun. My left hip has a little confusion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident ; it might happen to the very best rider in England.

Fun. Indeed !

Brid. We have such things happen every day at the manage ; but you are vastly improv'd.

Fun. Why, I am grown bolder a little ; and, Mr. Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a live horse ?

Brid. The very instant you are able to keep your seat on a dead one.—

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Bless me, Mr. Fungus, how you are trifling young time ? I expect lady Sacharissa every moment, and see what a trim you are in.

Fun. I beg pardon, good Madam Mechlin. I'll be equipp'd in a couple of minutes; where will her ladyship please to receive me?

Mrs. Mech. In this room, to be sure; come, stir, stir.

Fun. I have had a little fall from my horse—I'll go as fast as I—Mr. Bridoun, will you lend me a lift?

[*Exeunt Fungus and Bridoun.*]

Mrs. Mech. There—Jenny, show Mrs. Loveit in here—Who's there?—

Enter SERVANTS.

Pray move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haste. Madam, if you'll step in here for a moment.

Enter Mrs. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, Mrs. Mechlin; well, you see I am true to my time; and how have you throve, my good woman?

Mrs. Mech. Beyond expectations.

Mrs. Lov. Indeed! And have you provided a party?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and such a party, you might search the town round before you cou'd meet with his fellow: he'll suit you in every respect.

Mrs. Lov. As how, as how, my dear woman?

Mrs. Mech. A gentleman by birth and by breeding; none of your little whipper-snapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a presence as portly; he has one fault indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs. Lov. What is it?

Mrs. Mech. His age.

Mrs. Lov. Age! How, how?

Mrs. Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid; not above twenty at most.

Mrs. Lov. Well, well, so he answers in every thing else, we must overlook that; for, Mrs. Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection below.

Mrs. Mech. True, Ma'am.

Mrs. Lov. And where is he?

Mrs. Mech. I look for him every minute: if you will but step into the drawing-room; I have given him such a picture, that I am sure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs. Lov. My dear woman, you are so kind and obliging: But, Mrs. Mechlin, how do I look? Don't flatter me; do you think my figure will strike him?

Mrs. Mech. Or he must be blind.

Mrs. Lov. You may just hint black don't become me, that I am a little paler of late; the loss of a husband one loves will cause an alteration, you know.

Mrs. Mech. True; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs. Lov. But things will come round in a trice.

[Exit Mrs. Lovell.]

Enter SIMON.

Sim. Madam, Miss Dolly is dizen'd out, and every thing ready.

Mrs. Mech. Let her wait for the commissary here; I will introduce him the instant he is dress'd.

[*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]

Sim. Miss Dolly, you may come in; your aunt will be here in an instant.

Enter DOLLY and JENNY.

Dol. Hush, Simon, hush; to your post.

Sim. I am gone——

[*Exit Simon.*]

Dol. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality-air?

Jen. As perfectly, Ma'am, as if you had been bred to the business; and for figure, I defy the first of them all. For my part, I think Mr. Fungus very well off; when the secret comes out, I don't see what right he has to be angry.

Dol. Oh, when once he is noos'd, let him struggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we may trust to your management. I hope, Miss, I shall have the honour to follow your fortunes; there will be no bearing this house when once you have left it.

Dol. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of so useful a second; besides, for mistress and maid, we rather know one another a little too well.

Jen. Indeed! But here comes Mr. Fungus; remember distance and dignity.

Dol. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I see what I have to hope. Our young filly seems to be secure of her match; but I may

jostle her the wrong side the post; we will have a trial, however: but I must see and find out the brother.

Enter Z. FUNGUS and Mrs. MECHLIN.

Fun. Yes, scarlet is vastly becoming, and takes very much with the ladies; quite proper too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs. Mech. Stay where you are till you are announc'd to the lady—Mr. Fungus begs leave to throw himself at your ladyship's feet.

Dol. The mon may dra nigh.

Mrs. Mech. Approach.

Fun. One, two, three, ha! Will that do?

Mrs. Mech. Pretty well.

Fun. May I begin to make love?

Mrs. Mech. When you will.

Fun. Now stand my friend, Mr. Gruel. But she has such a deal of dignity that she dashes me quite.

Mrs. Mech. Courage.

Fun. Here, hold the paper to prompt me in case I shou'd stumble. Madam, or, may it please your ladyship, when I preponderate the grandeur of your high ginnyalogy, and the mercantile meanness of my dingy descent; when I consider that your ancestors, like admiral Anson, sail'd all round the world in the ark; and that it is a matter of doubt whether I ever had any forefathers or no; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts of my towering ambition—Ah—a, is not Phaeton next?

Mrs. Mech. Hey!—(Looking at the paper.) No

my

Luna.

Fun. Right—Ambition—dignity how debas'd, distance how great! it is as if the link should demand an alliance with Luna, or the bushy bramble court the boughs of the stately Scotch fir; it is as if—What's next?

Mrs. Mech. Next—hey!—I have lost the place, I am afraid—Come, come, enough has been said; you have show'd the sense you entertain of the honour. Upon these occasions, a third person is fittest to cut matters short. Your ladyship hears that—

Dol. Yes, yes, I keen weel enough what the mon wou'd be at. Mrs. Mechlin has spear'd sike things in your great commendations, Mr. Fungus, that I cannot but say I clik'd a fancy to you from the very beginning.

Fun. Much oblig'd to Mrs. Mechlin, indeed, please your la'ship.—

Dol. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North Briton can boast.

Fun. I know it full well, please your la'ship.

Dol. And that I shall get the ill-wull of a' my kin by this match.

Fun. I am sorry for that, please your la'ship.

Dol. But, after the ceremony, it will be proper to withdraw from town for a short space o' time.

Fun. Please your la'ship, what your la'ship pleases.

Dol. In order to gi' that gossip Scandal just time to tire her tongue.

Fun. True, your la'ship.

Dol. I mun expect that the folk will mak' free wi' my character in choosing sike a consort as you.

Fun. And with me too, please your la'ship.

Dol. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs. Mech. Hold your tongue.

Dol. Donna you think the honor will dra' mickle envy upon you?

Fun. Oh, to be sure, please your la'ship. I did not mean that.

Dol. Weel, I say, we'll gang into the country.

Fun. As soon as your la'ship pleases; I have a sweet house hard by Reading.

Dol. You ha'? that's right.

Fun. One of the most pleasantest places that can be again.

Dol. Ha' you a good prospect?

Fun. Twenty stage-coaches drive every day by the door, besides carts and gentlemens carriages.

Dol. Ah, that will——

Mrs. Mech. Oh, your ladyship will find all things prepar'd: in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fun. The honour of your la'ship's hand——

Dol. Maister Fungus, you're a little too hasty.

[*Exit Dolly.*]

Mrs. Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you must not expect to be too familiar at first.

Fun. Pray, when do you think we shall bring the bedding about?

Mrs. Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter sets in.

Fun. Not before?

Enter YOUNG LOVEIT, *hastily*.

Y. Lov. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr. Harpy wou'd call.

Mrs. Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr. Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the same hands after you.

Fun. He's heartily welcome: What, and is his wife a woman of quality too?

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a cit; but monstrously rich. But your lady will wonder——

Fun. Ay, ay: but you'll follow; for I shan't know what to say to her when we are alone.

[*Exit Fungus.*]

Mrs. Mech. I will send you, Sir, your spouse in an instant: the gentlewoman is a widow, so you may throw in what raptures you please.

Y. Lov. Never fear. (*Exit Mrs. Mech.*)—And yet this scene is so new, how to acquit myself—let me recollect—some piece of a play now——“Vouchsafe divine perfection!”—No, that won't do for a dowager; it is too humble and whining. But see, the door opens, so I have no time for rehearsal——I have it——“Clasp'd in the folds of love, I'll meet my doom, “and act my”——

Enter Mrs. LOVEIT.

Mrs. Lov. Hah!

Y. Lov. By all that's monstrous, my mother!

Mrs. Lov. That rebel my son, as I live!

Y. Lov. The quotation was quite apropos! Had it been a little darker, I might have reviv'd the story of Edipus.

Mrs. Lov. So, Sirrah, what makes you from your studies?

Y. Lov. A small hint I receiv'd of your inclinations brought me here, Ma'am, in order to prevent, if possible, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs. Lov. Your father! how dare you disturb his dear ashes? you know well enough how his dear memory melts me; and that at his very name my heart is ready to break.

Y. Lov. Well said, my old matron of Ephesus.

Mrs. Lov. That is what you want, you disobedient unnatural monster: but complete, accomplish your cruelty; send me the same road your villanies forc'd your father to take.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Mrs. Mech. Hey-day? What the deuse have we here? our old lady in tears!

Mrs. Lov. Disappointed a little; that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Pray, Ma'am what can occasion—

Mrs. Lov. Lord bless me, Mrs. Mechlin, what a blunder you have made!

Mrs. Mech. A blunder! as how?

Mrs. Lov. Do you know who you have brought me?

Mrs. Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs. Lov. My own son! that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Your son!

Mrs. Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural——

Mrs. Mech. Blunder indeed! But who could have thought it? why, by your account, Ma'am, I imagin'd your son was a child scarce out of his frocks.

Mrs. Lov. Here's company coming, so my reputation will be blasted for ever.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, leave the care on't to me.

Enter FUNGUS and DOLLY.

Fun. What is the matter? You make such a noise, there is no such thing as minding the writings.

Mrs. Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having set eyes on her son since the death of his father, and being apprised by me that here she might meet with him, came with a true maternal affection to give him a little wholesome advice.

Mrs. Lov. Well said, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Which the young man returned in a way so brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother—Be comforted, Ma'am; you had better repose on my bed.

Mrs. Lov. Any where to get out of his sight.

Mrs. Mech. Here Jenny.

Mrs. Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party?

Mrs. Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs. Lov. Ugh, ugh——

[*Exit coughing.*]

Mrs. Mech. Bear up a little, Ma'am.

Fun. Fie upon you, you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the stericks.

Y. Lov. Sir?

Fun. You a man! you are a scandal, a shame to your sect.

Enter Dr. CATGUT.

Dr. Cat. Come, come, Mrs. Mechlin, are the couple prepar'd? the fiddles are tun'd, the bows ready rosin'd, and the whole band—Oh, you, Sir, are one party, I reckon; but where is the—Ah, Dolly! what, are you here, my dear?

Dol. Soh!

Fun. Dolly! Who the devil can this be?

Dr. Cat. As nice and as spruce too! the bridemaids, I warrant: why, you look as blooming, you slut.

Fun. What can this be? Hark ye, Sir.

Dr. Cat. Well, Sir.

Fun. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr. Cat. Rank and condition! what, Dolly?

Fun. Dolly! what a plague possesses the man? this is no Dolly, I tell you,

Dr. Cat. No!

Fun. No, this is Lady Scracarissa Mackirkincroft.

Dr. Cat. Who!

Fun. Descended from the old, old, old Earl of Glendowery.

Dr. Cat. What, she? Dolly Mechlin?

Fun. Dolly devil; the man's out of his wits, I believe.

Enter Mrs. MECHLIN.

Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, will you set this matter to rights?

Mrs. Mech. How! Dr. Catgut?

Fun. The strangest fellow here has danc'd up stairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dolly'd my lady; who the plague can he be?

Dr. Cat. Oh, apropos, Molly Mechlin; what, is this the man that is to be married? The marriage will never hold good; why he is more frantic and madder——

Fun. Mad! John, fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you scoundrel!

Enter ISAAC FUNGUS and JENNY.

I. Fun. Where's brother? it a'n't over; you be'n't marry'd, I hope?

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; why, what is the——

I. Fun. Pretty hands you are got into! Your servant, good Madam; what, this is the person, I warrant; ay, how pretty the puppet is painted! Do you know who she is?

Z. Fun. Who she is! without doubt.

I. Fun. No, you don't, brother Zac. only the spawn of that devil incarnate, dress'd out as——

Z. Fun. But hark ye, Isaac, are—don't be in a hurry—are you sure——

I. Fun. Sure—the girl of the house, abhorring their scandalous project, has freely confessed the whole scheme. Jenny, stand forth, and answer boldly to what I shall ask: Is not this wench the woman's niece of the house?

Jen. I fancy she will hardly deny it.

I. Fun. And is not this mistress of yours a most profligate——

Mrs. Mech. Come, come, Master Isaac, I will save you the trouble, and cut this matter short in an instant.—Well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fun. And ar'n't you asham'd?

Y. Lov. She asham'd! I wou'd have told you, but I cou'd not get you to listen; why she brought me here to marry my mother.

Z. Fun. Marry your mother!—Lord have mercy on us, what a monster! to draw a young man in to be guilty of incense. But, hark ye, brother Isaac.

[*They retire.*]

Dr. Cat. Gad's my life, what a sweet project I have help'd to destroy! But come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again: thou hast a good pretty voice; I'll teach thee a thrill and a shake, perch thee amongst the boughs at one of the gardens; and then as a mistress, which, as the world goes, is a much better station than that of a wife, not the proudest of them all——

Mrs. Mech. Mistress! No, no, we have not managed our matters so badly. Hark ye, Mr. Commissary?

Z. Fun. Well, what do you want?

Mrs. Mech. Do you propose to consummate your nuptials?

Z. Fun. That's a pretty question, indeed!

Mrs. Mech. You have no objection then to paying

the penalty, the contract here that Mr. Harpy has drawn.

Z. Fun. The contract! hey, brother Isaac!

I. Fun. Let me see it.

Mrs. Meck. Soft you there, my maker of candles, it is as well where it is: but you need not doubt of its goodness; I promise you, the best advice has been taken.

Z. Fun. What a damn'd fiend! what a harpy!

Mrs. Meck. And why so, my good Master Fungus; is it because I have practis'd that trade by retail which you have carried on in the gross? What injury do I do the world? I feed on their follies, 'tis true; and the game, the plunder, is fair: but the fangs of you and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel.
To their candour and justice I make my appeal;
Tho' a poor humble scourge in a national cause,
As I trust I deserve, I demand your applause.



